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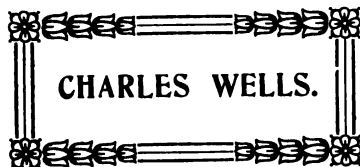
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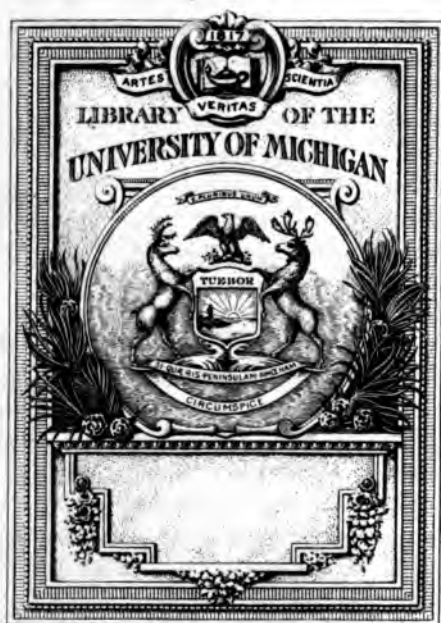
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**BRISTOL**

**A HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL  
ACCOUNT OF THE CITY**









ST. MARY REDCLIFFE, FROM THE FLOATING HARBOUR

# BRISTOL

A HISTORICAL AND  
TOPOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT  
OF THE CITY

WRITTEN BY  
ALFRED HARVEY, M.B.  
ILLUSTRATED BY  
E. H. NEW



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METHUEN AND CO.

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## PREFACE

It is the object of the series of which this book forms one to link incident and place as closely as possible one with the other ; to describe the buildings and other objects in the city dealt with, not so much in their topographical order, as in connection with those chapters of the city's history, political, ecclesiastical, or civic, which they illustrate ; with those periods during which they had their origin. That this has not been attempted, at least in a compact form, is the justification for yet another book about Bristol.

Many volumes have already been written on the subject of Bristol history and topography, and I have availed myself freely of the work of others, and take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligation rather than by frequent references in the narrative. Owing to Chatterton and his 'Rowley' forgeries, Bristol histories have been looked on with a distrust which is scarcely deserved : even William Barrett, who suffered most from Rowley, has produced a work which, read with caution, is of great value ; not only

**Preface** was he a careful observer, but he had access to much material not now accessible. The City Corporation possess several manuscript records of extreme importance, chief among which are *The Little Red Book*, commenced by Colford, the Recorder, in 1344, and recently printed for the Council; and Robert Ricart's *Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, a volume singularly rich in information concerning the minute history of Bristol in the Middle Ages, edited by Miss Toulmin Smith for the Camden Society, 1872. Contemporary with Ricart's *Kalendar* is the *Itinerary* of William Worcester, edited by Nasmyth (Oxford, 1778), the larger portion of which is devoted to a laboriously detailed account of the topography of the city in the latter half of the fifteenth century, with, incidentally, a good deal of general information. The two last-named books taken together give a vivid picture of a mediæval mercantile town, and the life and manners of its citizens. Of more modern works in addition to Barrett, I have relied chiefly for the earlier history on Seyer's admirable *Memoirs, Historical and Topographical* (Bristol, 1823), a book characterised by caution and accuracy; and for the later, on the late Mr. John Latimer's monumental *Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries*. The three volumes, *Bristol Past and Present*, by Nicholls and Taylor, contain,

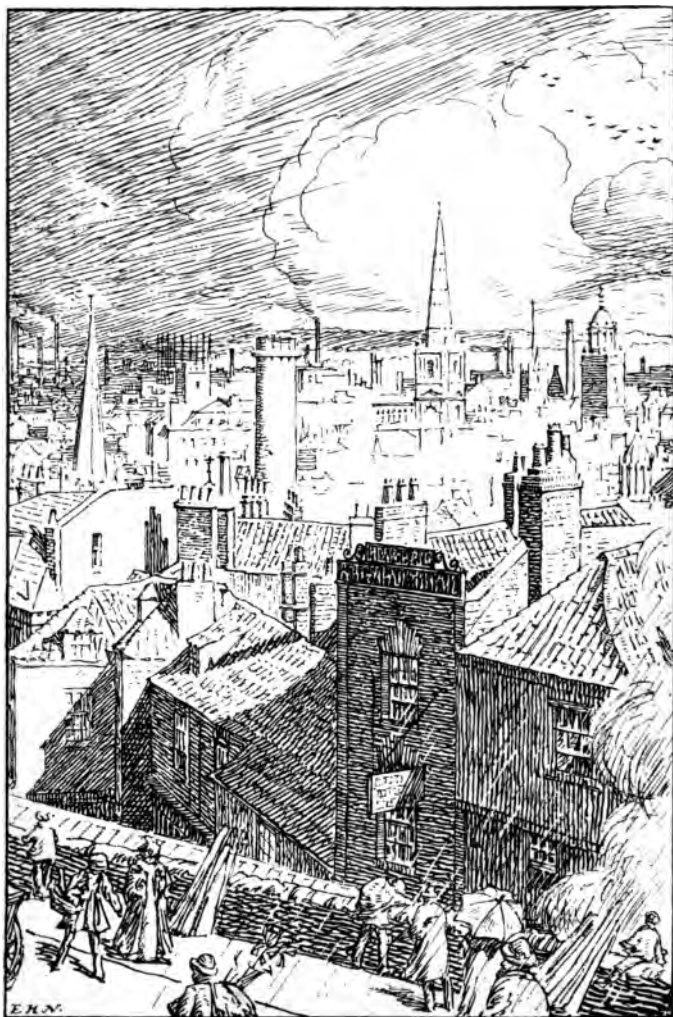
among much irrelevant matter, a mine of useful information, but they are not entirely trustworthy; this censure does not apply to the volume by John Taylor on the ecclesiastical history. Mr. Hunt's *Bristol* in the 'Historic Towns Series' gives a valuable account of the history of Bristol, particularly as a great mercantile community, in short compass; and the fairest account of the Reform Riots may be found in Molesworth's *History of England*, vol. i.

Of works dealing with special subjects, the anonymous charters of 1736, and Seyer's charters, 1812; Garrard's *Life and Times of Edward Colston* (1852); Barker's *Mayor's Chapel*; Latimer's *History of the Merchant Venturers' Company*; Fox's papers on the guilds, and an anonymous pamphlet on the two sieges (Bristol, 1868), have been drawn upon, and the large collection of newspaper cuttings and magazine articles at the Bristol Museum Library has been utilised.

Further, I desire to express my obligation for kind help and advice to Professor B. C. A. Windle, F.R.S., the General Editor of the series, and to Mr. J. E. Pritchard, F.S.A.; to the Council of the Archaeological Institute, for permission to make use of the plan in their Bristol volume; and not least, to the artist, Mr. E. H. New, for the illustrations which illuminate the pages which follow.







BRISTOL FROM ST. MICHAEL'S HILL

## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY



THE CITY ARMS

ABOUT six miles from the point where that river Avon, which is distinguished by the name of the most important city on its banks as the Bristol Avon, joins the sea, and one above the spot where it bends sharply to the north to enter the deep and narrow limestone gorge now spanned by the world-

famous Clifton Suspension Bridge, it receives the waters of a lesser river, the Frome, one of several of that name in the south-west of England. Entering the Avon valley from the north, the Frome flows for some distance nearly parallel to the larger river before bending round to join it, and between the two streams there is a long narrow peninsula of red



Bristol marl, which, though of no great height, rises well and boldly above the waters. On the north of the valley, a range of heights, now covered by houses, but once well wooded, rises almost abruptly from the Frome bank. To the south, hills of equal height but of gentler slope are separated from the Avon by a tract of flat and marshy ground, while to the east the peninsula is joined to the higher ground beyond by a low and narrow neck. On this peninsula the mediæval town of Bristol was built.

The site was an ideal one for a commercial port at a time when vessels were of no great magnitude. Well sheltered and fertile; possessed of a climate warm and genial, though perhaps sufficiently enervating to give some reason for Byron's taunt of Bœotian; well provided with fresh water and far enough removed from the sea for shelter from storm, and for safety from piratical hordes, from whom it was further guarded by the peculiar chasm through which it was approached by water; with a deep tidal river whose soft mud enabled boats to be safely beached at low water and whose wash acted as an efficient scavenger, it was inevitable that Bristol should hold a high place among English towns from the earliest time that Englishmen put to sea in ships. Accordingly we find that its rise and growth, its greatness, its periods of decline and revival, have all been dependent on the advantages of its situation and their limitations. Bristol had a great and strong castle, but it owed nothing, or less than nothing, to its lords; few towns were so rich in monastic and

ecclesiastical foundations, but these were the outcome of the town's prosperity, in no way the cause of it; it received royal charters innumerable, but obtained nothing from royalty that it did not pay for in cash or other consideration; it is, in fine, the one town in England that rose purely by its convenience for commerce, and became great and powerful, wealthy and beautiful, solely through the energy, enterprise, and public spirit of its citizens, especially its merchant princes.

But though there seems scanty reason for supposing that the town of Bristol had a local habitation and a name until the Danish invaders and the Scandinavian settlers of Ireland taught the English the advantages of over-sea commerce, yet there is abundant evidence that the valley of the Avon and its surrounding heights nourished a considerable population many centuries earlier, even from a period stretching far back into prehistoric times. Traces of the sepulture of neolithic man have been found at various places along the northern heights, and finds of his implements and weapons have been very numerous; and at Druid Stoke, in the suburban district of Stoke Bishop, a cromlech still remains by the roadside, partly fallen but almost complete: perhaps the only example of such a relic so near a great town. Of a more recent date, but still at least four or five hundred years before the Christian era, relics of the Bronze Age have been found: a socketed celt and a bronze sword or dagger have been recovered from the bed of the Avon, and in 1899 a

**Bristol** specially interesting find of a set of tools was made in the valley of the little river Trym, within two miles of Abona, the Roman precursor of Bristol. These implements, which are now in the Bristol Museum, are of extreme beauty, and highly finished, and prove the possession of a considerable degree of civilisation on the part of their makers. They are four in number, and comprise three flanged celts differing in size and ornamentation, and a chisel of remarkable shape.

The site of a busy town, continuously inhabited for a thousand years, is an unlikely place to expect to find vestiges of still earlier antiquity; but still in the very heart of Bristol, within the narrow circuit of its earliest walls, relics have been found which are assigned by Professor Boyd Dawkins to the prehistoric Iron Age. The most impressive monuments of very early antiquity, however, are to be seen, not in the valley, but on the heights which the modern city is gradually overspreading. These are three camps, or forts, which command the narrowest part of the Avon gorge, at the point now spanned by the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Of these camps one is on the Clifton or Gloucestershire side of the gorge, and the other two in the high woods on the Somerset side. The Clifton camp is the smallest, but gives evidence of greater building skill, in that its ramparts are of cemented masonry. It crowns the height immediately above the approach to the bridge, and its works are, on the whole, well preserved. It contains between three and four acres, and is protected

by a triple rampart stretching in a curved direction, from cliff to cliff, for nearly three hundred yards; the entrance may still be traced near the north-east end of the ramparts, and there seems to have been a lesser entrance or postern at the other end, from which a path led down the face of the cliff to the spring which provided the fort with water, and on to the ford through the Avon, by which communication was gained at low water with the encampments on the other side of the river. The Somerset entrenchments are placed on the heights exactly opposite, and are separated by a deep and narrow ravine, usually known as the Nightingale Valley, but more correctly Stokeleigh Coombe, which runs far inland. The larger and more accessible of the two, known as Bower Walls (Burgh Walls) Camp, is traversed by the Bridge Road, and its site is occupied by houses and gardens, so that it is almost entirely destroyed. It measured between seven and eight acres, and formed a quadrant, the straight sides formed on the east by the cliff overhanging the Avon, and on the north by the almost equally precipitous slope of the Nightingale Valley; the landward side was protected by three great curved ramparts, parts of which remain in the gardens. The third and most perfect of the group is that known as Stokeleigh Camp, which is less easy to find as it is hidden away in the Leigh Woods; the pedestrian who has crossed the bridge will reach it by turning sharply to the right, and then following the road which skirts the Nightingale Valley almost to its head. He must then plunge

Origin  
and  
Early  
History

istol into the woods, cross the valley, and retrace his course on its northern side, when he will come upon the great earthworks near their southern end. Stokeleigh Camp is very similar in plan to that of Bower Walls, but a little smaller; its great inner rampart of loose stones rises to the height of thirty feet above the ditch at its foot. Outside there is a second, lower rampart, less perfect, and traces of a third. When Seyer wrote a century ago the interior of the camp was quite open and free from trees, and he described remains of two stone buildings within its area; and as late as 1894 Mr. Baker, in his *Bristol and the Channel Circuit*, said that it was free from trees and that the buildings could be traced: the woodland has now completely overgrown the camp, and the buildings, if they still exist, are concealed in the undergrowth. At the apex of the triangle, overhanging the Avon, there still remains a small rounded mound, which was probably a signalling station, and from which the hills of St. Brendan and St. Blaise, with their names suggestive of beacon fires, could be seen. These camps were not intended as towns, but formed a citadel or acropolis in which the dwellers in the plain and the valleys could take refuge, with their herds, in time of danger, though it is probable that the chieftains with their immediate dependants had their habitations there.

No part of England seems to have attained a higher pitch of prosperity during the Roman occupancy than Gloucestershire, if we may judge from the number and the richness of the villas found

there; but there was no colony at Bristol, and no evidence of a town of even the fourth degree of importance. This does not mean that the district was unknown to the Romans; it is certain that as early as the reign of Claudius, the general Ostorius spent some time in the neighbourhood, which he defended by a range of earthworks, many of which still remain; and finds of coins, pottery, and even of portions of buildings have not been infrequent. Moreover, the Antonine Itinerary very definitely shows that there was a town, Abona, which, if not actually occupying the site of the more modern Bristol, was within a measurable distance of it. The passage in the old road-book which relates to the Bristol district occurs in the fourteenth of the fifteen British journeys, and reads—‘from Isca Callevam (Caer leon) to Venta Silurum ix miles; to Abona ix miles; to Trajectus, ix miles; to Aqua Sulis (Bath) vi miles.’ Of the five places mentioned the situation of three is certain, so that there is not room for much difference of opinion in placing the other two. The situation of Abona has been placed at Bitton on the Avon below Bath, at Bristol, Sea Mills, and Avonmouth, all on the Avon, and at King’s Weston on the Severn. Seyer suggested that Sea Mills was Abona, and most subsequent writers on the subject have agreed with him. Not only is it the one place which fits in with the Itinerary without any unnecessary torturing of the figures, but there is evidence of a considerable Roman station at that place, which we may regard as fairly certainly the site of Abona.

## Bristol

The camp at Sea Mills is situated on the shore of the Avon, within the present limits of the city of Bristol but below the gorge. The entrenchments contain about fifty acres, a fair size for a smaller Roman station, and more than twice the area of the mediæval Bristol. It slopes down to the little tidal river, the Trym, which bounds it on the north-west; on the south-west is the Avon, and on the north-east a deep and steep ravine; on the exposed fourth side there are remains of a mound strengthened by bastions, and the whole position is characteristically Roman both in form and situation. It has never been systematically explored, but tiles, coins, fragments of pottery of Upchurch, Salopian, and Samian ware have been found, and a portion of a funereal inscription to the memory of Spes, the wife of one Sentius, now in the Bristol Museum. The road from Bath to the South Wales district, known since the thirteenth century as the Julian Way, can be traced in the neighbourhood of Sea Mills. It led from Bath to Bitton (Trajectus) and on to Hanham, where it is lost; it then probably skirted Bristol on the north, past Baptist Mills, where traces of Romano-British interments have been found, and Redland, where the suggestive name of Coldharbour occurs, and reappears on Durdham Down, near the reservoir of the Bristol Water Company. Having crossed the Down the road bifurcates, one half leading straight to Sea Mills, the other turning off to King's Weston, while another road of very early date connects the two last-named places.

Other signs of Roman occupation have appeared from time to time : a notable one was the discovery in the bed of the Frome of a pig of lead bearing the name of Antonine, now in the museum. The lead mines of the Mendips had been worked at least from the time of Vespasian, and this discovery affords reason to believe that the metal was brought down to the neighbourhood where it occurred for shipment ; if this is so, a small commercial port must have existed on the actual site of modern Bristol from a very early time. Lastly, a very fair example of a detached and isolated villa, of moderate size and somewhat late date, was discovered in some building operations on the south side of the Avon, above the city, in 1899. The foundations of this building were nearly perfect, and it contained some good pavements, which have been in part preserved. It contained also a number of coins, ranging in date from A.D. 265 to 361—dates which give a roughly approximate idea of the time of the villa's building and of that of its destruction. Many examples of Upchurch and Salopian ware were found, and some of Samian and Pseudo-Samian ; there were, too, many objects of household use and of personal adornment of bronze and iron, bone and ivory, and not least in interest a series of seven large vessels of pewter : all these objects are now deposited in the museum.

The five centuries which followed the departure of the Romans were even more absolutely blank in the history of Bristol than the earlier times. Seyer, it is true, believed that the Romano-Britons



Bristol came down from the heights after the introduction of Christianity, and founded a town on the Bristol peninsula. That Bristol was of Roman origin he argued from the plan of the streets, and that it was Christian from the position of churches at three of the angles at the High Cross, if not at all four. This may be true, but it is pure conjecture; no trace of Roman masonry has ever been discovered within the limits of the city proper.

He further suggested that Abona was destroyed by the Saxons or Danes and not rebuilt, and that the former utilised, or rebuilt, the town already existing in the more sheltered position when they obtained possession of the district after the battle of Deorham, in 577.

There is some evidence, though it is not conclusive, that Bristol existed as a town during the period of the Mercian supremacy, 659-821, in the dedication of one of its churches to the Mercian Saint Werburgh, daughter of King Wulfere. As far as is known, all churches bearing this dedication belong to an early date. But the first definite information about our town comes, curiously enough, from Stockholm, where, with many other rare Saxon coins, relics doubtless of the hated and ignominious Danegelt, there is a silver penny of Ethelred II., surnamed the Unready, having on the obverse the king's head, with his name and titles, and on the reverse a cross with the inscription *ÆLFWERT ON BRIC*, signifying minted at Bristol by Ælfwerd the moneyer. From this reign to the Norman Conquest examples of

Bristol money are fairly numerous, every reign being represented except the short one of Hardicanute. Here then at last we are on solid ground: this penny shows that at the beginning of the eleventh century Bristol had, from its small and obscure origin, become an established town and one of sufficient importance to be the seat of a mint, and negatively that it had at that date only recently attained such importance, notwithstanding the uncorroborated statement of Roger Hoveden that in the days of Athelstan it was decreed that there should be a monetary at Bristol among other places.

The first authentic mention of Bristol in English history occurs in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where under the date 1052 it is recorded that Harold the Earl and Leofwine went to Bristol in the ship which Sweyn the Earl had before got ready for himself and provisioned.

Of the condition of Bristol, and of its status at the time of the Conquest, a little may be gleaned from the meagre entry in Domesday Book. The entry runs: 'In Bertune apud Bristou were 6 hides. In demesne 3 teams, and 22 villeins, and 25 bordars with 25 teams. Here were 10 serfs and 18 co-liberts having 14 teams. Here were 2 mills worth 27 shillings.

'When Roger received this manor from the king he found there 2 hides, and 2 teams in demesne, and 17 villeins, and 24 bordars with 21 teams. Here were 4 serfs and 13 co-liberts with 3 teams.

'In Mangotsfield a member of this manor are 6 oxen

Bristol in demesne. Of the same land the churches of Bristou have 3 hides, and have then one team.

‘One Radchenist holds one hide, and has one team and 4 bordars with 1 team.

‘This manor and Bristou pay the king 110 marks of silver. The Burgesses say that Bishop G. (Geoffrey of Coutance) has 33 marks of silver and 1 mark of gold, besides the king’s ferm.’

This statement is not too full, but from it we are able to glean that Bristol was not even yet a separate borough, but officially at least only a hamlet in the royal manor of Barton, whose name still survives in the local government district of Barton Regis, though, curiously enough, owing to successive changes of boundaries the modern district now contains no portion of the old manor. Further, that there were already more churches than one, and that the town was probably surrounded by some sort of wall, in all likelihood a rampart of earth: this seems to be implied in the word Burgesses; and lastly, that the ferm payable, most of which would fall on the town as the rest of the manor was very thinly populated, was one of the largest in the kingdom, proving that Bristol was already ranked among the wealthy and important towns of the realm.

To sum up, out of a mass of tradition and conjecture, the few known facts of the earlier history of Bristol appear to be: that the lower Avon valley was inhabited from the earliest times; that without crediting the legends of Brutus or the mythical Brennus and Belinus, or even the story of the founda-

tion of the city by Dyfnwal Moelmydd, B.C. 390-350, received by the cautious Seyer, there was a British town at Clifton having its citadel at the three camps; that the Romans had a military station and port, Abona, at Sea Mills, and probably a commercial port at Bristol; that after a period of intense darkness, lasting for some centuries, a Saxon town grew up on the peninsula, whose inhabitants, shut off from the rest of England by the impenetrable forests of Horwood and Kingswood, took little part in the general politics of the kingdom and suffered little by its troubles, but devoted themselves successfully to a foreign trade, chiefly with Ireland and Scandinavia; that already the slave-trade, which in later years was to contribute so much to the wealth of Bristol, had commenced, and that before the beginning of the eleventh century the town had attained sufficient importance to be the seat of a mint; that at the Norman Conquest the town, though still only a hamlet in the manor of Barton Regis, was a populous place surrounded by a rampart and containing several churches.

Now that at last Bristol has become a town with a name, it is time to consider the origin and significance of its title. Few place names have probably more variants in spelling: Seyer has a list of thirty-five different forms in addition to seven French varieties, but up to the time of Queen Elizabeth or even later the one most usually accepted was Bristow, while in Latin it has been generally Bristollia. The derivation of the name has in time past been much

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disputed, and various etymologies have been suggested ; of these we may discard at once that from the fabulous Brennus or Brynne, and that from Brictric, the Saxon Lord of Gloucester at the time of the Conquest, a derivation suggested by Chatterton and supported only by his forgeries ; Camden's Brightstow, the famous town, has as little to recommend it ; and there remain only Britostow, the town of the Britons, favoured by Seyer, and Brigstow or Bridge-stow, the enclosure of the bridge, first suggested by Gibson in his notes on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* : the last is now universally accepted. From the name we glean one more fact about the early town, namely, that the wooden bridge, which is known to have preceded that of stone, was already in existence long before the Norman Conquest.



THE SEA WALLS

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ST MARY REDCLIFF



## CHAPTER II

### BRISTOL, UNDER THE NORMAN AND PLANTAGENET KINGS



WHEN the Norman conquerors came to Bristol they found in existence an enclosed town which was already ranked among the largest in the kingdom, and it may be wise to try to picture what that town was like. It occupied the summit and slopes of the low hill which forms the centre of the present city, and was surrounded by water, except at its east end; on the south was the broad and deep bed of the tidal Avon, while round the north and west wound the Frome, which, it must be remembered, did not take its present course, but curved to the south at the base of the

hill, through a channel which was perhaps artificial,



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past the site of St. Stephen's Church and along the course of the present Baldwin Street, to join the Avon just below the bridge. The surplus waters then found their way across the marsh below the town to enter the main river some distance lower down. On the river Frome were two mills—one above the town near the spot where the castle was afterwards to be built, the other below, on the now obliterated stream not far above the bridge. The town itself was surrounded by a rampart of earth, low internally but externally of some height owing to the scarping of the hillside, and was entered by four gates, one at the end of each of the principal streets. The rampart followed the lines which were afterwards taken by the first Norman walls, having a space of varying width between it and the rivers, and it enclosed not more than twenty acres. Within this narrow enclosure a population of from two or three thousand souls was huddled. Four main, though narrow, streets traversed the walled space, meeting at a cross almost at the highest point of the town, and between these and the ramparts was a maze of still narrower lanes. The houses were huts of timber framing filled in with laths and mud, and few probably had more than one, or, at the most, two rooms. Conspicuous among them rose several small churches: St. Peter's, St Werburgh's, and St. Mary-le-Port almost certainly, and probably St. Owen's, All Hallows', and the Church of the Holy Trinity; the last where Christ Church now stands. Outside the gate at the foot of High Street a long narrow bridge of

timber afforded communication with the township of Redcliffe and the county of Somerset, and at the opposite side of the town a smaller bridge, possibly of stone, crossed the Frome. By the side of the Avon there was a broad quay, and the river itself was crowded with small vessels, floating on its waters or beached upon its steep mudbanks.

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The men of Bristol do not seem to have offered any resistance to the Conqueror; on the contrary, when in 1069 the three sons of Harold landed at the mouth of the Avon with troops from Ireland, they beat them off and drove them back to their ships. The change of dynasty seems to have meant only a new king to whom to pay their ferm, and as a mercantile community they were on the side of established law and order. They do not seem to have met with any oppressive treatment, no doubt because they belonged to a royal manor; and perhaps on account of their loyalty to the new government, the king's local representative, the *prepositus* or provost, was a fellow-townsmen, one Harding, said to be the son of a Saxon Thane Eadnoth, and founder of a family destined to figure largely in the subsequent history of the town.

During this reign the slave-trade became a national scandal. Not content with the legitimate trade, which was deplorable enough, the Bristol merchants bought up the kidnapped youth of both sexes, without asking questions, for shipment to Ireland; and this to such an extent that the town acquired the nickname of the stepmother of all England. Law and authority

Bristol were powerless against the disgraceful traffic, until the saintly Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, in whose diocese Bristol then was, took the matter up in earnest, and by spending months at a time in the town and preaching against the trade Sunday after Sunday at last succeeded for a time in abolishing it. His biographer gives a graphic description of the evils of the trade. 'There is a town called Bricstow, opposite to Ireland, and extremely convenient for trading with that country. Wulfstan induced them to drop a barbarous custom, which neither the love of God nor the king had been able to prevail on them to lay aside. This was the mart for slaves, collected from all parts of England, particularly young women whom they took care to adorn so as to enhance their value. It was a most moving sight to see in the public markets rows of young people, of both sexes, and some of great beauty, tied together with ropes and daily sold. Execrable fact! Wretched disgrace! Men unmindful even of the affections of the brute creation delivering into slavery their relations and even their very offspring.'

During the closing years of the Conqueror's reign, Bishop Geoffrey of Coutance, a man high in William's council, was made Constable of Bristol with considerable, though not precisely determined, powers. He was neither earl of the county nor owner of the manor, but we have seen from Domesday Book that he received about a third of the geld payable by the town, and he was the chief landowner in the neighbourhood. He was a man, says Ordericus

Vitalis, who knew better how to instruct mailed soldiers in warfare than vested clergy in singing, and it was he who built the first castle here, and who probably surrounded the town with its first stone wall. On the death of the Conqueror Bishop Geoffrey declared for Robert of Normandy, and with his nephew Robert of Mowbray took a leading part in the fighting which took place, making his new castle at Bristol a base from which he destroyed Bath and plundered all the neighbouring country. History is silent on the fate of the bishop, but the rebellion was quelled, and within two years William Rufus granted Bristol Castle to Robert Fitz-Hamo, the conqueror of South Wales. During Fitz-Hamo's time the castle appears to have been *Caput Honoris*, though he lived chiefly at Cardiff. Dying in 1107 from wounds received at the battle of Tenchebrai, his vast estates including Bristol became the property of his daughter Mabel, whom Henry I. married to Robert of Caen, known also as Robert Consul, his natural son by Nest, the daughter of Rees ap Tudor. An early chronicler tells the story that on the king's proposing the marriage to her, Mabel suggested that it would be shameful to marry a man without a second name, whereupon the king said that his son should be known as Fitz-le-Roy. To this Mabel objected that it was not a name which could descend to his sons, and the king promised that he should be Earl of Gloucester, with which the lady was well content. With his wife's vast possessions and his own lands in Kent and elsewhere, and an enormous fortune in

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**Bristol** money estimated at the sum of £60,000, Robert was the most powerful subject in England, and he seems to have been the ablest. He was handsome in appearance, renowned for skill in arms, and distinguished for culture and love of letters, to which testimony is borne by both Giraldus Cambrensis and William of Malmesbury, who dedicated their books to him. He made his home at Bristol, and under his care the town prospered greatly, the harbour being crowded with ships from all parts. On the site of Bishop Geoffrey's castle on the neck of land between the town and the mainland Earl Robert built a new castle of great strength and magnitude, with a tall square keep resembling that at Rochester, and said to be one of the largest in England: this fortress was soon to stand him in good stead. He was not unmindful of the duties of religion, and devoted a tithe of the stone obtained for castle-building to the erection of a priory for Benedictine monks outside the walls, which he founded and liberally endowed.

On the death of Henry I., Robert took the oath to Stephen, but he soon afterwards renounced his allegiance and headed the movement on behalf of the legitimate heir, the Empress Matilda. The war which ensued, and which desolated the kingdom almost until the death of Stephen, belongs rather to general than to local history, but as the headquarters of one of the contending parties our town took so prominent a part that the struggle has been termed the Bristol war. It is not too much to say that Bristol was, in fact, at this time what it has

since been its proud boast to be—the Capital of the West, for nearly half the kingdom acknowledged the title of the empress. Our chief knowledge of the events of this time depends on chronicles wholly hostile to Gloucester, chiefly on the *Gesta Regis Stephani*, by Robert de Monte, a monk of Mount St. Michael in Normandy, but through them all the military ability and the statesmanlike qualities of the earl stand out, as well as his personal character, the one faithful and unselfish man where all was treachery and self-seeking.

The direct interest of Bristol in the war began early, for in 1188 or 1189, before the landing of the empress and her brother, Stephen sat down before Bristol Castle, and finding it impregnable to assault, debated whether to blockade the town or, by damming the Avon at the narrow point now crossed by Clifton Bridge, to flood it out. He finally determined to raise the siege: a momentous decision, for had Bristol fallen twelve or fourteen years of devastating strife would probably have been avoided. After the battle of Lincoln, when Maud's star was at its brightest, King Stephen himself paid an enforced visit to Bristol, for he was brought here a prisoner in 1141, and lodged in the castle, where he remained nearly a year, until exchanged for the earl after the capture of the latter at Winchester. In the following year Bristol Castle received another illustrious visitor, for the boy prince, Henry of Anjou, afterwards Henry II., was brought over by his uncle and remained here four years.

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Bristol     Here he was educated in letters by one Matthew, who, we are informed, lived in Baldwin Street—a fact significant as showing that the town had already grown beyond the narrow limits of its walls. Matthew was rewarded later by receiving the bishopric of Angers. Henry and his cause received more tangible assistance at the hands of another citizen, Robert Fitzharding, whose money-bags were at the service of the empress. Fitzharding was the son or grandson of that Harding whom we have met with as the Conqueror's *prepositus*, and he was at this time the richest citizen, and the owner of the two adjacent manors of Billeswick and Bedminster, on the former of which he erected the monastery of St. Augustine, now the cathedral. He too received his reward, for even before the death of Stephen Henry conferred upon him the castle and estate of the dispossessed lord of Berkeley, and arranged a double marriage between Fitzharding's eldest son and Berkeley's daughter, and between the son of Berkeley and one of Fitzharding's daughters: the double marriage took place in 1153 at Bristol, in the presence of King Stephen and Henry, who were then at last reconciled. With Fitzharding began the long and intimate, though not always friendly, relations between the town of Bristol and the lords of Berkeley.

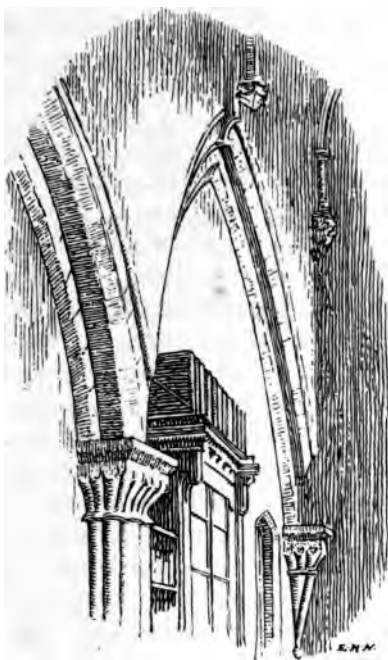
Earl Robert had died in 1147, and was succeeded by his son William, who in 1175 surrendered the castle to the Crown, and arranged a marriage between his daughter Isabella and the king's youngest son

John, whom he made his heir: the marriage took place in 1189, some years after the earl's death. In this reign the men of Bristol obtained their first royal charter, dated 1163, confirming existing privileges, and granting them exemption from toll and passage, and other customary payments for themselves and their goods through the king's own lands. The intimate connection between Bristol and Ireland

is illustrated by a curious charter granted a few years later, giving to Bristol the city of Dublin to inhabit, with all the liberties and free customs which they have at Bristow. A relic of this intercourse perhaps lingers in the dedication of two of the Dublin churches to Saints Werburgh and Audoen (Ewen).

King John, who was everywhere, was often at

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NORMAN HOUSE IN SMALL STREET



- 1 Bristol. While yet Earl of Moreton, some years before he succeeded to the throne, he granted to the townsmen a charter which was the foundation of their liberties; by the terms of this charter the burgesses obtained local courts, freedom from tolls, exemption from the obligation to grind their corn at the lord's mill, and liberty of marriage for themselves, their sons and daughters and widows, without licence of their lords. It also ordained that no foreign merchant should buy within the town of any stranger hides, corn, or wool, but only of the burgesses, and that no foreigner should have any tavern but in his ship, nor sell cloth to be cut but in the fair, and further that no stranger should tarry in the town to sell his merchandise longer than forty days. It further provided for local option by enacting that no man should take an inn within the walls against the will of the burgesses, to whom it granted their holdings by free burgage with permission to improve their houses, upon the bank and elsewhere, without damage to the town and borough. Lastly, it provided that they should have their reasonable guilds in as full a manner as they held them in the time of his predecessors Robert and William, Earls of Gloucester. Seyer says that this charter also gave to the burgesses the right to choose their own chief magistrate, but this crowning mark of freedom does not appear to have been obtained until the reign of John's successor. The growing importance of Bristol at this time is shown by the assessment of a tallage in 1199, when Gloucester paid 300 marks,

while Bristol was assessed at 500, with 100 more for the men of Berkeley, that is to say, Redcliffe, and 50 for Temple Fee.

It was here that John's well-known act of cruelty to a Jew occurred: a Jewry had grown up under royal favour between the old wall on the north side of the town and the river Frome. As early as 1177 we read that the burgesses were fined 80 marks for one Sturmis, the usurer, whom they had probably killed or injured; but the royal protection was only extended to preserve the unfortunate men as milch-cows for the royal cupidity, and in or about 1210 John demanded from an old Jew at Bristol the enormous sum of 10,000 marks. The wretched man refused to ransom himself at such a price, and the king ordered that one of his teeth should be extracted each day until the money was paid. The Jew held out for a week, but succumbed on the eighth day and paid the fine.

Whatever John's general character, he proved himself a good and reasonable lord to his town of Bristol, and its citizens were not ungrateful, adhering to his cause through the troubled later years of his reign; and when on John's death in 1216 the young King Henry III. had been hurriedly crowned at Gloucester, he was immediately brought here for security, and here his first council was held, under the presidency of the Papal Legate, when allegiance was sworn to him, and his opponents were excommunicated. The men of Bristol seized the favourable opportunity of the king's temporary residence among them to obtain

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**Bristol** the much-coveted right to choose their own chief magistrate, and they elected Adam le Page as the first of an unbroken series of mayors in 1216, only six years after the 'barons' of London had obtained the same privilege. This important change in the government of the town does not appear to have been made by charter, but in each succeeding charter granted by the same king the mayor is recognised as an existing officer.

In 1225 the king farmed to the burgesses the revenues of the town for an annual payment of £245, reserving to himself a portion of the prisage of wines, together with the bailiwick of Barton and its chase and woodlands. In the year 1254 Bristol was included among Prince Edward's settlements on the occasion of his marriage with Eleanor of Castile. The misgovernment of Henry at last alienated the burgesses of Bristol, and during the Barons' War they showed active sympathy with de Montfort's party; and, when Edward demanded a contribution of £1000 from the town towards putting the castle in a state of defence, the turbulent townsfolk not only refused the money but drove him from the castle, 1263. Two years later, when Earl Simon's cause was already desperate and he himself was penned up beyond the Usk, the Bristol men had the courage, greater because the castle was again in the royal hands, to attempt his relief, and in answer to his urgent request despatched to him at Newport a fleet of transports. The attempt, however, was too late: Edward was ready with three

ships of war; most of the unarmed Bristol vessels were taken or sunk, and the Earl of Leicester was forced to make the disastrous land march which ended in his defeat and death at Evesham.

The long reign of Henry III. formed a very important epoch in the internal history of Bristol. Its trade advanced by leaps and bounds, and to accommodate it we shall see that between 1240 and 1247 a very extensive scheme of harbour improvement was successfully carried out. The men of Redcliffe were compelled to join in this undertaking, which helped to hasten the incorporation of the southern suburb with the more important town on the northern side of the Avon. This desirable object was not accomplished without much ill-will and not a little bloodshed, and was not finally achieved till a century later. As soon as the harbour improvement was completed another public work of equal magnitude was set in hand, which aided considerably in uniting the rival townships. This was the erection of the first stone bridge across the Avon, in place of the narrow and decayed wooden bridge which had been heretofore the only means of communication between the two banks. As a preliminary, the Avon was temporarily diverted into a new course, cut from a point called Tower Harritz in Temple Back above the town, to a point nearly opposite Redcliffe Church below—no slight work of engineering in itself—and then the old course of the river was dammed so that the masons could work continuously. Then three immensely massive piers were erected in the bed of

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Bristol the river, and abutments at each end, and from these four narrow arches were turned. Barrett, who lived at the time the old bridge was rebuilt, says that the original arches were semicircular, but old drawings, one of which is given in his book, represent them as pointed. The bridge was narrow, only nineteen feet in width, but was doubtless wide enough for the traffic of the time. In after years secondary arches, pointed in form, were erected on each side parallel to the original ones, and on these lofty houses of timber were built overhanging the water, as at London, making a charmingly picturesque *ensemble*, but sadly narrowing the road over the bridge, and converting it into a difficult and dangerous tunnel. The first of these encrusting buildings was a bridge chapel attached to one of the piers on its upper side, which William Worcester says was dedicated in 1361, and was 75 feet in length by 21 in breadth. The chapel was raised on an undercroft which appears to have been used at one time as a town hall, or meeting-place for the council. This chapel, which was dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, was destroyed in 1642, but the houses remained until the bridge was rebuilt soon after 1760, when the present graceful structure of three arches was erected. Like its predecessor the new bridge proved to be too narrow, and it has been widened and disfigured by the addition of overhanging foot-paths carried on iron girders. Upon the completion of these great engineering works the suburbs on the south and west were enclosed by new walls, which

more than doubled the fortified area of the town, and which further marked the oneness of the community: the southern wall followed the line of the temporary channel of the Avon, which was utilised as its ditch. The growth in wealth and prosperity does not seem to have been materially hindered by two fires which occurred in 1237, which laid a great part of the town, with its closely packed houses of timber framing, in ashes.

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Edward I. was in Bristol in 1276, and made an excursion to visit the Abbey of Glastonbury, where he is said to have exhumed the bones of King Arthur. He came again in 1281 and 1284, on one of which occasions he spent his Christmas here 'with much content and satisfaction,' and married his eldest daughter to the Earl of Bar. It was on the occasion of this visit that the one Parliament ever held in Bristol sat. Towards the end of this reign, the long-continued struggle between the lords of Berkeley and the burgesses of Bristol over the jurisdiction of Redcliffe culminated in open strife. The officers of Sir Maurice Berkeley had seized and imprisoned a Bristol citizen, whereupon the townsmen with the mayor at their head crossed the bridge, broke into the gaol and rescued their fellow-citizen, and, according to Sir Maurice, carried off, in addition, plunder worth 500 marks. Both sides appealed to the king, who appointed a commission to inquire into the case. The decision on the immediate issue was in favour of the townsfolk, and the Berkeleys were mulcted in a heavy fine; but the vexed question of

**Bristol** jurisdiction was left unsettled, and it remained an occasion for conflict for seventy years longer.

During the next reign occurred the most remarkable event in the annals of Bristol, the 'Great Insurrection,' during which the town was for several years in a state of open rebellion, an independent and self-governed town where the king's writ ceased to run. The exact cause of this singular civil war is obscure, but there can be no doubt that it was only the weakness of the monarch which made it possible. It seems to have originated in the growing tendency, which Bristol shared with most of the boroughs of the kingdom at that time, for the government of local affairs to pass from the hands of the burgesses at large to those of a narrow and self-elected oligarchy. Here the governing power was held by a small body of leading citizens, probably members of the Merchants' and Mariners' Companies, known as 'the Fourteen,' who were at this time a castle party, supported by and lending their assistance to the constable of the castle, Lord Badlesmere. Against them the commonalty, the general body of the burgesses, were led by an able man, John Taverner, who had been mayor twice and had represented the borough in Parliament, and they had on their side several wealthy and prominent citizens who were not included in the Fourteen; they made the natural claim that all burgesses ought to share equally in the privileges of the government of their town. The popular discontent came to a head when the king intrusted Badlesmere with the ferm of the town, which had for many years been let to the

municipal body. Then began on the side of the citizens a policy of passive resistance; they refused to pay taxes to the constable, and neither Badlesmere nor his agents were allowed to enter the town. This happened in 1312, and during the same year the king was appealed to, and sent down a commission of judges to inquire into the matter. As the president of the commission was Lord Thomas of Berkeley, who was still smarting under the rebuff he had so recently received at the hands of the burgesses, there was little doubt as to the upshot of the inquiry; and so it appeared to the townsmen, for, complaining that the jury was packed with strangers, they attacked the Guildhall where the commission was sitting. In the struggle which ensued twenty lives were lost and the judges with difficulty escaped. The next move on the king's part was to deprive the town of its liberties and privileges, taking the government into his own hands, with Badlesmere as Custos. At the same time, the ringleaders of the popular party were indicted at the Gloucestershire assizes, and, failing to appear, were outlawed. The people replied by electing Taverner mayor, driving the Fourteen from the town, and imprisoning the king's bailiff. Under Taverner's direction a wall was built across the narrow eastern end of the town, on or near the present Dolphin Street, so as to exclude the castle from the general line of defence. The town had hitherto, as we shall see, been dominated by the castle on this side. Having put the place into a state of defence the mayor undertook the whole

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Bristol government, collecting all the taxes and dues, and disregarding royal mandates. His government seems to have been judicious; the only act of oppression occurring under his rule being the seizure of the goods of the Fourteen, for which he perhaps was not responsible. After this state of things had continued more than a year, the Earl of Gloucester was ordered to raise a force in the counties of Gloucester, Somerset, and Wiltshire, and early in 1314 he appeared before the walls with no fewer, it is said, than 20,000 men. Taverner had the hardihood to close the gates against them, and as the necessities of the Scottish war drew away the troops he was left in undisputed possession for two years longer. The name of William Randolph, the leader of the oligarchy appears, it is true, in the list of mayors for the year 1315, but it is pretty certain that he was not admitted within the walls. At length in 1316 serious and effectual measures were taken. In March of that year a fresh inquisition into the whole matter was held at Westminster, and the popular party was so far recognised as to be represented there. The case was decided against them, and Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, was sent down to Bristol to promise lenient treatment if the town was surrendered and the ringleaders given up. His intervention proved unsuccessful, and at last the town was besieged in force: communication by sea was cut off by Maurice de Berkeley, and Badlesmere with a large land force laid siege trains against the walls. The new wall was battered from the castle, and after a

few days the town surrendered. The rebellious town was treated with singular leniency: Maurice de Berkeley, it is true, was appointed Custos, but beyond the banishment of the Taverners, father and son, and the infliction of a fine of 4000 marks, no penalty was exacted, and its liberties were soon restored. The result may be considered a victory for the commonalty; but the tendency of the time was not to be resisted, and though the Fourteen disappeared, all municipal power soon passed into the hands of a close corporation of a few wealthy and influential families.

In 1320 the king granted Bristol to the younger De Spenser, and in the following year he was here with him and gave the town a new charter, which was simply a confirmation of previously granted privileges. When in 1326 civil war broke out again Edward took refuge in Bristol Castle, but on the queen's advancing to its siege he and the younger De Spenser fled into Wales, leaving the father of the latter in command at Bristol. The townsfolk appear to have forced De Spenser to surrender, and the next day the old man was drawn on a hurdle outside the town and executed as a traitor. On the same day a council was held here, which made the young Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward III., regent of the kingdom. The king was imprisoned for a time in the castle, but on the discovery of a plot, engineered, it is said, by the friars of the neighbouring Dominican convent, for his rescue, he was removed for safer custody to Berkeley. The unfortunate king seems to

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**Bristol** have been once more in Bristol during the obscure wanderings which preceded the tragedy at Berkeley Castle on September 21, 1327. After his death his body was offered to the abbot of St. Augustine's, who refused it the sepulture more generously, and as it turned out prudently, given by the abbot and convent of Gloucester.

On the accession to the throne of Edward III. Maurice de Berkeley was made governor of Bristol Castle, and his forfeited lands were restored to him; this was the signal for a renewal of the disputes between the town and the Berkeleys concerning the lordship of Redcliffe, disputes which we shall see were finally set at rest a few years later. The ferm of the town, according to what had become the usual custom, was assigned to the queen on her marriage; this custom gave rise to the appellation often applied to Bristol of 'The Queen's Chamber.' When on Queen Philippa's death in 1369 the ferm lapsed to the king, it amounted to £158, 11s. 9d. annually. We have already seen that, in the reign of Henry III., the revenue was farmed to the burgesses for £245; the fall in the amount does not imply any diminution in the wealth of the town, but rather that the community was more powerful and in a position to drive a better bargain for itself. In 1345 a very useful piece of work was accomplished when William de Colford, the Recorder, at the request of the commonalty, drew up the ordinances, customs, and liberties of the town and recorded them in writing, together with the bye-laws and other memorable things for a perpetual remem-

brance; and the mayor, calling to his assistance forty-eight of the more powerful and principal citizens, they agreed on many useful laws and ordinances, which were confirmed by the charter obtained of Edward III., dated the 16th of October in the fifth year of his reign (Barrett). The king also granted an aid, the beginning of the harbour dues, from all ships and boats of merchandise for the repair of the walls and quays. An equally useful if less flattering privilege, given by the same king, was the right to set up a gaol for malefactors and disturbers of the peace.

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In the general history of the country Bristol took a part by furnishing ships for the French wars. For the campaign of 1346, which culminated in the victory of Crecy, Bristol furnished a contingent of twenty-four ships and 608 men, almost equalling the contribution of London, and for the later wars a still larger squadron, which included the *Gabriel*, of 215 tons, belonging to the well-known citizen Richard Spicer, and the *Gracedieu*, a vessel of 200 tons, the property of another merchant prince, Walter Derby, mayor in 1363, 1367, and several times later. These two vessels, which were of unusual size at that time, were captured by the Spaniards in 1475.

Edward's fiscal policy, prohibiting the export of raw wool and the import of woollen manufactures, proved to be of great advantage to Bristol trade. The town had already a considerable weaving industry, and under the fostering influence of protection it soon became one of the chief seats of the cloth manufacture in the kingdom. And this in spite of the

**Bristol**     Black Death, which in 1348 and 1349 carried off, it is supposed, more than half of the population, and left the grass growing inches high in the principal streets. In 1353 Bristol was made one of the eleven 'staple' towns—that is, towns fixed upon as the sole places where certain taxable commodities known as staple goods, including wool and leather, lead and tin, might be exported. The object of this measure was to make the collection of the royal dues easier and more economical, but it gave an immense advantage in the struggle for trade to the favoured towns. The merchants trading in staple goods formed a corporation in each town having its own officers, but at Bristol the mayor of the town was, *ex officio*, mayor of the staple. Some three years later the Bristol merchants were represented at a council summoned to London to advise upon trade.

This reign witnessed the granting of a charter which satisfactorily ended the struggle of the townsmen for a reasonable measure of freedom and self-government, and makes an epoch in the history of their town. The provisions of the charter are so important that some little space may reasonably be devoted to its consideration. It seems that the mayor and commonalty had made representations to the king that the town of Bristol was partly in Gloucestershire and partly in Somerset, and more than thirty miles distant from Gloucester and Iwelchester (Ilchester), the respective county towns where the assizes and county courts were held, and other public business was transacted; that the access was difficult, the

roads deep and dangerous in winter (Ilchester is even now by no means easy of access from Bristol); and that, notwithstanding, the burgesses were bound to appear at the county towns at the taking the assizes, jurats, and inquisitions, whereby they were sometimes hindered in the management of their navigation and merchandise, to the prejudice of their estates and the manifest impoverishing of the town. The charter in question was granted in 1373 in answer to these representations to whose truth it assented, but it did far more for the town than merely remedy the grievance. It began by stating explicitly that it was granted in consideration of the good behaviour of the burgesses, and of their good services done to the state by their shipping and otherwise in time past, as well as for the sum of 600 marks paid to the royal treasury, and its most important clause was to the effect that the town with its suburbs and precincts should be separated from the counties of Gloucester and Somerset, and that it should be a county of itself to be called the county of Bristol. No other provincial town had as yet received this honour, so that Bristol was now undisputedly the second town in the kingdom; York attained the same dignity about twenty years later. The charter went on to define the mayor's duties and prerogatives, to provide for the election of a sheriff, and to establish a county court and a mayor's court for the trial of offences; the old manorial court of the Tolzey, which exercised summary jurisdiction in petty cases, being preserved. It also made provision for a number of justices of the peace, of whom the mayor

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**Bristol** was to be one. It further enacted that the mayor should take the oaths, not before the constable of the castle as heretofore, but before his predecessor in office—a provision not perhaps of much practical importance, but significant as marking the complete civic freedom from feudal control. Another interesting clause provided for the creation of a town council. The mayor and sheriff were empowered to elect, *with the consent of the commonalty*, forty of the better and more honest men of the town to form a common council, with power to raise a rate and make bye-laws. It further provided that the two burgesses who represented the borough in Parliament should also be the knights of the new county, so that Bristol should not be at the expense of paying four members.

This charter was signed at Woodstock on August 8, 1373, and the next month a commission was appointed, consisting of twelve jurors of Bristol, and twelve each from the two counties of Gloucester and Somerset, to settle the boundaries of the new county. The commission acted with commendable promptitude, and on October 30 of the same year their report received the royal assent. The new boundary line included the city and its suburbs on both sides of the Avon, but excluded the castle and its precincts. The importance of the port was recognised by giving to Bristol the control of the whole of the lower Avon, with both its banks, including the estuary of the Severn as far as the islands of Steep Holme and Flat Holme. Incidentally it finally settled, in favour of

the burgesses, the long-standing quarrel with the Berkeleys and the Templars and their successors over the jurisdiction of Redcliffe and Temple Fee.

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THE HIGH CROSS





ST. MARY REDCLIFFE

## CHAPTER III

### BRISTOL IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES



THE TOLZEY

**B**RISTOL had now attained the undisputed position of the second city in the kingdom, and among provincial towns ranked among the first for its manufactures, while as a mercantile port it was easily pre-eminent. It still played its part in the general history of the

country, but henceforward the chief interest in its history is purely domestic, and lies in the growth and development of its trade and commerce, and in the progress of its civic institutions. It will be well now to consider what this trade was at the period at which we have arrived, the closing years of the fourteenth century. The chief articles of manufacture were cloth, soap, and leather. A flourishing manufacture of cloth had existed for many years, the weavers

**Bristol** dwelling and working chiefly on the south side of the Avon, in Tucker Street and Temple Street, where their guild had its hall. It received a great impetus under Edward III., owing to the fostering influence of his protective policy, and Bristol became for a time one of the chief seats of the trade. Even more important in its effect was the Black Death which depopulated Bristol at this time; and which, by leading to an influx of population from the country districts into the towns, completely altered the nature and character of the industry. Hitherto each master craftsman had worked in his own house, assisted perhaps by one member of the craft who had not yet commenced business on his own account, and by one or two apprentices, and outside labour was jealously excluded. Thus there was no social or civil difference between master and man; each was a member, in his degree, of the craft guild; and craftsman and apprentice each looked forward to the time when he too would be a master: thus, too, there was a comfortable and assured position for all, no great fortunes were made, but there was probably little extreme poverty. With the incidence of the plague this condition of the trade was changed; a sharp line of demarcation between master and man appeared, and the struggle between capital and labour began. The more wealthy manufacturers were able to employ many journeymen who were not members of the guild, had served no apprenticeship, and had no expectation of ever rising from the ranks. So wealth tended to accumulate in the hands of a few families, and hence-

forward the history of Bristol is for many years largely the history of its merchant princes. It may be open to doubt whether the change was beneficial to the community, but it is certain that the accumulation of wealth in a few hands contributed very much to the beauty of the town, and especially of its churches and public buildings, and it seems on the whole to have been spent wisely and with public spirit. Signs of the coming change in industrial methods were not wanting in Bristol some few years before the time of the Black Death. Soon after the export of raw wool was forbidden, an enterprising townsman, Thomas Blanket, commenced to make the better sorts of cloth on a large scale by the help of foreign workmen. It is doubtful whether the word 'foreign' here has what was then its usual significance—that is to say, men who did not belong to the town—or whether it is used in the more modern sense: it is not at all unlikely that Blanket did import Flemish or French weavers to instruct his men in the art of making the finer cloths. Blanket at first met with the usual fate of industrial innovators; he was fined by the mayor and bailiffs, and his men were interfered with to such an extent that he was obliged to appeal to the king, who sent down a writ commanding that he and others should be allowed to employ such men as they pleased. His unpopularity was not of long continuance; he himself was elected bailiff in 1341, and his fellows in the trade paid him the sincere flattery of imitating his methods. He is commonly said to have invented the article which still bears his name, but whose

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Bristol manufacture is more usually associated with the little town of Witney ; this, however, is not correct, as a coarse white cloth had been known in England as blanket or *blanchette* two or three centuries before his time.

The two other less savoury staple industries had also been carried on in Bristol for many years on the bank of the Avon, in the low-lying parish of St. Philip : Bristol soap was sent to London, and the tanning of leather was carried on on a large scale ; in the year 1438 over 40,000 skins of various sorts were imported by sea in addition to those of English growth.

Quite as important as the manufacturing industry of Bristol was its export and import trade. An extensive importation of French wines had begun in the days when Henry II. was the ruler of the chief wine-growing district of France. This was shared by Bristol with London and Southampton, but of the growing trade in the wines of the Spanish Peninsula she had almost a monopoly, and sherry became known as Bristol milk at an early date. The quantity of fish brought in was very considerable, and much of it was salted here for distribution inland. From Ireland came linen and food-stuffs, and butter from Wales. Another large item was iron ; and these, with the hides and skins already mentioned, made up the bulk of the imports, though the Bristol merchants had already begun to obtain their share of the rich Levant trade, though here they had to contend with the keen and bitter rivalry of the

Genoese, the Lombard Janneys as they are called in a contemporary calendar, who claimed a monopoly of the Mediterranean trade and did not stop short even of piracy to secure it. In 1459 a goodly ship belonging to Robert Strange was seized by them, and its cargo confiscated. On complaint being made to the king he arrested and imprisoned all the Genoese merchants in London, and did not release them until compensation to the large amount of 9000 marks was paid. The chief articles of export were cloth and leather, and in addition a small quantity of cutlery and glass, but the value of the goods exported seems to have been far less than that of the imports. The goods imported were stored partly in warehouses on the quay, but chiefly in great vaulted cellars beneath the houses, some of which still remain; of these not less than 160 were in existence when William Worcester, who made an incomplete list of them, wrote. From the disgraceful slave-trade, which we have met with earlier and shall meet with again in a different form in later years, Bristol was at this time commendably free.

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During the reign of Richard II. several forced loans were raised in Bristol, the sums contributed being far larger than those raised by any other town, London only excepted. The astute city fathers did not pay over the money without a *quid pro quo*, as they obtained in 1396 exemption for the town from the vexatious jurisdiction of the steward, marshal, and market clerk of the king. During this reign

**Bristol** Wycliffe's ablest disciple, John Purvey, conducted a mission here and made many converts to Lollardy, and though it appears that some of them suffered death, their doctrines obtained a hold which lasted till the Reformation. The closing years of Richard II. bore a curious resemblance to those of the second Edward, and like that king he visited Bristol just before his fall. He came here on his way to Ireland, accompanied by Bushey, Scrope, Bagot, and Green, his trusted councillors, who remained behind on his departure for Ireland. Bushey, Scrope, and Green were refused admittance to the castle, but attempted to hold the town; on the appearance of Bolingbroke's forces, however, the townsmen opened the gates, and the three were beheaded at the High Cross. With the last events in the life of the unfortunate monarch Bristol had nothing to do, but another political execution or murder took place here in the following year, when Lord De Spenser, a grandson of the old nobleman who had suffered death in the same place three-quarters of a century earlier, was beheaded by the townsmen.

During the troubled times which followed the accession of Henry IV. the Bristol ships rendered signal service to the king, and the town was again rewarded—this time with a charter granting exemption from the jurisdiction of the Admiralty Court on payment of a fine of £200. The royal interest in the revenue derived from the town was, as had become usual, assigned as a portion of the queen's dower. This revenue was steadily diminish-

ing, and when a few years later it was granted to the wife of Henry VI. it had fallen to no more than £60 annually. Eight Bristol ships helped to carry the victorious army of Henry V. to Agincourt, and during the long inglorious wars of the following reign the town again took her share, sending no fewer than thirty-three ships under the great Earl of Shrewsbury to take part in the last French invasion in 1453. In the following year, when hope of success abroad had vanished and there was actual dread of an invasion at home, a forced loan was raised for naval defence to which Bristol contributed more than any town except London. The king himself was here in 1446, and lodged, not at the castle, but at a little hospital in Redcliffe. It appears from the testimony of William Worcester that the castle was already dilapidated and ruinous, and unfit for the reception of a royal visitor. During the Wars of the Roses, Bristol, like most of the great industrial towns, took the Yorkist side. It was a Bristol merchant and member of Parliament, Young, who had moved as early as 1451 that the Duke of York should be declared heir to the throne, for which, by the way, he suffered imprisonment; and Bristol sent a contingent to fight for the White Rose at the great victory of Towton.

Edward IV. was at Bristol in 1461, when he watched from the windows of St. Ewen's Church the execution of the Lancastrian leader Sir Baldwin Fulford at the High Cross. He visited the town again in 1474, and was lodged in the Royal Tower

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**Bristol** at St. Augustine's Abbey. On the occasion of his first visit he received from the town, by the hand of William Canynges, the sum of 3000 marks, and granted it a new charter, and on his second visit he again obtained a large sum of money as a benevolence.

In spite of the long-continued and disastrous wars the fifteenth century was a period of great prosperity to the trading towns, which seem to have been little affected by the civil strife, which was pretty much confined to the great lords and their retainers, and was actually beneficial to the rising middle class. The contemporary observer Philippe de Commynes notices that there were no buildings destroyed or demolished by the war, and that the mischief of it fell upon those who made it. Of this commercial prosperity Bristol had its full share, and its history during the time in question is largely that of the most famous of its merchant princes, William Canynges the younger. This remarkable man was the grandson of the elder William Canynges, a wealthy cloth manufacturer who was mayor six times between 1372 and 1389, and represented the borough in Parliament, and has a claim on our gratitude in that he commenced the building of the existing church of St. Mary Redcliffe. His son John, mayor in 1392 and 1398, died young, leaving a widow with two young children, from the elder of whom descended George Canning and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who paid a tribute to his ancestor in his choice of a title. The widow married

Thomas Young, the richest and most enterprising Bristol merchant of his day. In his house the young William Canynges, the second son of John, was brought up, and his connection with Young was doubtless conducive to his success in life. Prosperity came early to Canynges, and in 1432 when he had reached the age of thirty-two he was appointed bailiff of the town; in 1438 he was sheriff, and three years later he served the first of his five terms as mayor. He was now very rich and powerful, and his influence was such that Henry VI. sought and obtained for him from the Master of the Teutonic Knights protection for his factors in Prussia, and he was able to obtain from the same king a patent for exclusive trading with Iceland and Finmark. His fleet consisted of nine vessels, of which the largest, the *Mary and John*, is said by Worcester to have been of the then enormous capacity of 900 tons, and two others, the *Mary Radclyf* and the *Mary Canynges*, were of 500 and 400 tons respectively. These figures seem almost incredible for English ships at that time, and Barrett suggests that they may have been of foreign build, as the Genoese were already constructing vessels of as large a burden. He employed eight hundred seamen, besides a little army of more than a hundred masons, carpenters, and other workmen, and he is said to have owned about a hundred houses in Bristol. For his own use he built a palatial mansion in Redcliffe, between Redcliffe Street and the Avon, whose handsome hall is still in existence. Much

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Bristol of his great wealth was spent for public or religious purposes. In the winter of 1445-46 the steeple of the still unfinished church of St. Mary Redcliffe was partly demolished by a great tempest of thunder and lightning, with much damage to the church; this damage Canynges set himself to repair, and at the same time completed the work of rebuilding begun three-quarters of a century earlier by his grandfather. In connection with the church he endowed a charity at the cost of £340, and built on the north side of the church a house, which still exists, for its priest. During the later years of his life he was dragged, probably against his will, into public politics. In 1456, as mayor, he entertained Queen Margaret, but his sympathies were Yorkist, and in the following year he seized a consignment of ammunition which had been sent to the town by the Master of the Ordnance, and held it for the Duke of York. On the accession of Edward iv. he sat on the commission which tried and condemned Sir Baldwin Fulford, and on the occasion of a royal visit he handed to the king the sum of 3000 marks—as a personal peace-offering, according to some writers, but more probably as a fine raised by the town and collected by him as mayor. Toward the close of his long life Canynges, who had survived his wife and children, entered religion, and joined the college of priests founded by his friend Bishop Carpenter at Westbury-on-Trym. He became an acolyte in 1467, and the following year was ordained deacon and priest. He

was soon afterwards elected dean of the college, where he died in 1474-75; he was buried, not in the collegiate church, but in the great church for which he had done so much, St. Mary Redcliffe.

Canynges, though the most prominent, was by no means the only rich merchant of his time. One Strange is recorded as possessing a fleet of twelve vessels in 1480, and Oliver, Norton, Sturmy, Vyal and Bagot were all owners of great mansions. Walter Frampton had rebuilt the church of St. John on a new site, and John Shipward added the noble tower, which forms so conspicuous an object in views of the town, to the church of St. Stephen. Another citizen of more than local note at this time was William Wyrcestre or Worcester, the father of English topography. This interesting character was born in a house on St. James's Back in 1415, and was educated at Hart Hall, Oxford; he afterwards entered the service of Sir John Fastolf, apparently as confidential clerk, and remained with him till his death in 1459; his name and his curious signature of W. WorHRcestre are familiar to readers of the Paston letters. After 1455 he generally adopted the name of his mother's family, Botoner, the family to whom is owing the great spire of St Michael's Church at Coventry, and signed himself BotoHRner. In Fastolf's service he travelled frequently over a large portion of England, and wherever he went he jotted down notes of the important buildings he saw, many of which have since wholly or in part disappeared. On the death of his employer in 1459, Worcester,

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Bristol     who had long been home-sick, proposed to retire to his native town, but his intention was not carried out for several years as he was detained in London and Norfolk by litigation arising out of Fastolf's will, of which he was an executor. At last in 1470 this was satisfactorily settled, and he bought a house with a garden in the parish of St. Philip, outside the walls, and spent his declining years in cultivating his garden, in translating Cicero's *De Senectute*, published by Caxton in 1473 under the title of the *Boke of Tulle of Old Age*, and especially in writing the account of his native town which forms the chief portion of his *Itinerary*. He paced every street, lane, and alley, noting their length and breadth; measured every church and other important building, sometimes enumerating every moulding; and recorded his observations, with much interesting information about the merchants and their wealth, the shipping in the port, and about local customs, in a curious but not unintelligible mixture of Latin and English, so that we are able to form a better idea of the topography of Bristol during the fifteenth century than of any other mediæval town in England. The original MS. of the *Itinerary* is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and it has more than once been printed.

The year 1483 was long known as that of the great storm. On the 15th of October of that year, during an eclipse of the moon, there was an unusually high tide in the Avon, accompanied by a tempest of wind and rain, resulting in floods which

caused the loss of about two hundred lives in the town, with great destruction of property. Henry VII. visited the town in 1487, and was received by the mayor and corporation with an elaborate pageant, and lodged at the abbey. The merchants, however, had already to complain of the decay of the cloth trade and a diminishing fleet. The king advised them to build more ships, and promised his help; the promise was fulfilled when, a few years later, by the treaty of 'The Great Intercourse,' some of the restrictions on foreign trade were removed. The king was here again in 1490, when he received a benevolence of £500, and rewarded the burgesses by fining all those worth £20 or more the sum of twenty shillings 'because their wives went so sumptuously apparelled.'

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During this reign trade received an enormous impetus by the discovery of America, and of the prosperity which followed Bristol obtained, owing to its advantageous geographical position, and to the enterprise and adventurous spirit of its merchants, a very full share. As early as 1480, two Bristol merchants had fitted out an expedition in search of the island of Brasylo to the west of Ireland. This expedition was unsuccessful, but it was followed by others; and at length, in 1497, the continent of North America was discovered by John Cabot, the Genoese navigator, in a ship which sailed from Bristol and was manned by Bristol men. The next year he sailed again, under a patent granted to himself, with two ships and three hundred men, accompanied

Bristol by his son Sebastian, who is said to have been born in Bristol. On this voyage Newfoundland was discovered, and the explorer sailed down the coast of the mainland as far as 36° north latitude. These voyages were not at once commercially successful, but the adventurous spirit they encouraged led to a greatly increased trade with Spain, the Levant, the Canaries, and the West Indies, notably by members of the Thorn family, honourably known in Bristol as the founders of the Grammar School.

The year 1521 was one of great scarcity, and it is said that the poorer citizens maintained life by eating bread made of fern root ground up with acorns. A few years later the 'Sweating Sickness' was so rife that Henry VIII., who was at Thornbury, twelve miles away, did not dare to enter the town. In these periods of distress both the corporation and the rich merchants did much for the relief of their poorer brethren.

The principles of the Reformation spread rapidly in Bristol, chiefly among the lower orders, the wealthier citizens chiefly adhering to the older Church. The changes which took place in church institutions and government will be dealt with in their proper place in connection with the ecclesiastical history of the city, but as far as they affected the civic life they may be treated here. Lollardy had apparently never been absent from Bristol; as late as 1498 a heretic was burned here for his religious opinions, and when in 1534 Latimer, then Rector of West Kington, Wilts, preached a series of sermons in Bristol, he

obtained a large following. He was followed by Hubberdin, a popular orator on the side of the old religion, and the controversy which ensued ended in riot. One intemperate young lecturer was brought before the magistrates and bound in sureties for good behaviour. This case is interesting as showing that the local magistrates took a common-sense view of the matter, and were not disposed to raise the preachers to the dignity of martyrs; but it is more interesting in having called forth an anonymous letter which still exists, which is curiously rich in the delightfully racy epithets applied to the city magnates:—‘Your foolish mayor, and that knave Thos. White, with the liar Abynton, the prater Pacy, and featering Sutton and drunken Touell, foolish Coke, dremy Smith and the niggard Thorne, hasty Sylke, strutting Elyott, simple Hart and grinning Pryn, proud Addamys and poor Wodden, the sturdy parson of St. Stevyns, the proud vicar of St. Leonards, the lying parson of St. Jonys, the drunken parson of St. Ewens, the brayling master of the Calendars, the prating vicar of All-halowys, with divers other knave priests shall all repent this doing.’ In 1539 George Wishart, afterwards the famous Scottish martyr, preached a Socinian sermon at St. Nicholas which ‘brought many of the Commons of this town into a great errour’; for this he was sentenced to bear a faggot in the church where the sermon had been preached. During the reign of Mary, some four or five persons were burnt at the stake for their religious opinions; but on the whole, both that and

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Bristol the following reign were commendably free from religious persecution, which was left to a later century.

In 1542 Bristol attained the dignity of being proclaimed a city on the establishment of its Episcopal See, and two years later she was represented at the siege of Boulogne by several ships, including the *Thorne* and the *Pratt*, barques of 600 tons. Soon afterwards the mint was re-established, after the lapse of several centuries, in the precincts of the castle, and at the same time and in the same place the first printing-press was set up. The collection of *octroi* had long caused much confusion and turbulence at the gates, in addition to its injurious interference with trade, and about this time the mayor, aldermen, and common council consented to its abolition, agreeing to pay the sheriffs a fixed sum; so that on June 26, 1546, it was proclaimed at the High Cross that the gates of the city should be free for all manner of strangers going in and out with their goods, and for all men on lawful business, and that the Back and the Quay should be free for all manner of merchandise except salt fish. This salutary reform was obtained by an agreement between the corporation and the vestries, by which the latter gave up a large portion of their church plate toward paying off the town debt: a fortunate bargain for the vestries, as events proved, for the plate would otherwise have inevitably fallen, in a very few years, into the rapacious hands of the advisers of Edward VI.

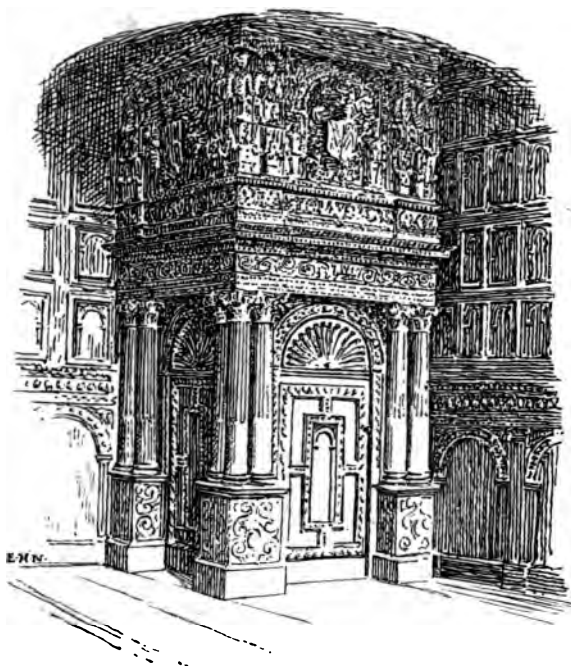
On the accession of that king a Papist rising

took place in Bristol, which was put down without severity. In the same reign the Tolzey, a quaint wooden penthouse beneath the shadow of All Saints' Church, was erected; it served the double purpose of a court of summary jurisdiction and an Exchange. The four handsome brazen tables which still stand on the pavement in front of the Exchange were placed beneath it a few years later for the convenience of merchants, and hence is said to have arisen the proverb 'to pay on the nail.' The policy of retaliation was put into force about this time by an ordinance, 'that all strangers who exact anchorage dues from us beyond the sea shall pay like anchorage here.'

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Queen Elizabeth visited Bristol in 1574 in the course of one of her progresses, and was received by the mayor and corporation at Lawford's Gate, and was conducted to Sir J. Young's great house on St. Augustine's Back. This fine Tudor house, which occupied part of the site of the Carmelite Friary, took the place of the Abbey as a lodging for royal or distinguished visitors; it afterwards housed the boys of Colston's School, and lasted until the last century, when it was destroyed for street improvement: the well-known Colston Hall occupies part of its site. The queen was received with the usual pageantry; there were processions of the city guilds or companies, boys representing Fame, Salutation, Gratulation, and Obedient Goodwill, made high-sounding speeches in rhymed verse, and there was much firing of musketry; there was, however, in addition one unusual and indeed original spectacle:

## Bristol



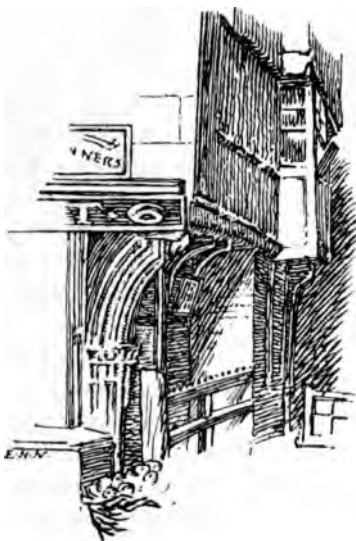
THE RED LODGE

this was a mimic siege of two forts erected in the Avon, with fighting by land and water, with much burning of gunpowder, to the great delight of the queen and all who witnessed the spectacle. During her visit, which lasted a week, Elizabeth viewed the cathedral and the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, and sailed down the Avon to inspect the shipping at King Road. In spite of this brave show, all was not

well with Bristol at this time; sickness was always rife in the closely huddled, ill-drained, and ill-ventilated town. In 1551 the sweating sickness had caused great mortality, and in 1564 an epidemic of plague had carried off about 2500 citizens. This recurred in 1575, when 1900 of the inhabitants perished, including many leading citizens; and there was a still worse visitation at the beginning of the new century, when in a year and a half there occurred 2956 deaths, of which no fewer than 2600 were due to plague. The population at this time is supposed not to have been more than about 6000 souls. Then the shipping trade had fallen off to such an extent that, in place of the noble squadrons which assisted the Edwards and the Henrys, Bristol was represented in the fleet which fought the Spanish Armada by a beggarly contingent of three small vessels and a pinnacle, and the total number of ships belonging to the port had fallen to thirty-seven. In addition to pestilence the town had to contend with famine; a year of scarcity in 1596 was followed in 1597 by one of the worst harvests on record; grain rose to famine prices, and the well-intentioned efforts of the corporation to keep them down probably only aggravated the evil. To their credit the rich merchants, now as on other occasions, came to the rescue: Alderman Whitson, in particular, imported 3000 quarters of rye from Dantzic, and sold it to the poor at reasonable prices; and the executors of Alderman Kitchin set aside 100 marks a week for the relief of the destitute. Fires too were very rife in the timber-

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**Bristol** built city, and to lessen the danger of them spreading, a bye-law was passed forbidding the employment of thatch as a roofing material. Thus the sixteenth century, which had dawned so brightly, closed in a period of gloom which was little lightened, and of depression which was not removed, till its successor had run half its course.



OLD HOUSE IN PETER STREET





THE 'DUTCH' HOUSE

## CHAPTER IV

### BRISTOL UNDER LATER SOVEREIGNS



CATHEDRAL FROM EAST

**D**URING the reigns of the earlier Stuart kings the prosperity of Bristol seems to have been at its lowest ebb. Not only was the town squeezed more thoroughly perhaps than any other in England by royal exactions, but its trade was grievously hampered by monopolies and restrictions. Every mercantile

community believed at that time in free trade for itself, and protection against all rivals, and as the wealthy London merchants and trading companies had the ear of the king, they obtained monopoly after monopoly to the detriment of the provincial traders. One of the first branches to go was the Turkey trade,



Bristol      which was granted to a London company. The Merchants' Company of Bristol made a strenuous fight for this, and were finally successful in getting the trade reopened in 1669. A more serious grievance in Bristol was the soap monopoly of 1631, by the provisions of which the local makers were restricted to the production of 600 tons a year, forbidden to use fish-oil in the manufacture, and heavily taxed. At the same time the growing import of tobacco, which was to become a most important factor in the commercial prosperity of the town, was absolutely forbidden. However, neither depression nor oppression could entirely extinguish the love of pageantry or the spirit of adventure. In 1612 James's queen, Anne of Denmark, paid a visit to her 'chamber,' and was so received that she is reported to have said that she never knew she was queen till she came to Bristol; while in 1631 Captain Thomas James, a lawyer by profession, but an explorer by nature, made one of the earliest attempts to discover the North-west Passage, in a tiny vessel, the *Henrietta Maria*, of 70 tons: though he failed to accomplish his attempt, yet by his discovery of James Bay he managed to write his name boldly on the map of the Western Hemisphere. Before James had returned from his adventurous voyage another Bristol man, Robert Aldworth, with his nephew Elbridge, had sent out an expedition to found a colony in New England.

Meanwhile King Charles's extortions grew apace. In 1634 he demanded and obtained £6500 from

Bristol as ship-money, and the next year the town paid £2163 for this hated tax, in addition to £25,000 for customs. Further exactions in 1637-38 raised a loud and angry protest; and when war at last broke out, there is small wonder that the mayor and most of the leading citizens took the side of the Parliament. The corporation maintained three companies of trained bands, and with these and the help of a company of volunteers they proceeded to put the walls and gates into a state of defence; and when in 1642 a small Royalist force under Sir Ferdinando Gorges applied for admittance, it was refused. With a show of impartiality, the same refusal was given to Colonel Essex, the Parliamentary governor of Gloucester; but, no doubt with the connivance of the authorities, one of the gates, Newgate, was left open to him, and by it he entered, and took command of the town.

Conscious of the importance of the possession of Bristol to either side in the struggle, Essex at once began to prepare for a siege; but it seems to have been felt by the Parliamentary leaders that, though a good soldier, he did not possess weight enough for so important a position, and he was almost immediately superseded by Nathaniel Fiennes, a son of Lord Saye and Sele, a brave and able man, but of no military training. Fiennes continued the work of fortification, but though he raised money in the city by the sequestration of Royalist property and by taxes, loans, and requisitions from the citizens generally, to or beyond the verge of unpopularity, he had continu-

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ally to complain to the Parliament of want of money and of men.

The situation of Bristol itself, so strong before the invention of gunpowder, rendered it now absolutely untenable, commanded as it was on all sides by neighbouring heights. To remedy this Fiennes drew an

extended line of fortifications on the north side of the town, stretching from a point on the Avon below the town to another above, and occupying the crest of the northern hills. Starting at the Water Fort, which rested on the Avon at the foot of Brandon Hill, a ditch and rampart climbed that steep eminence to the strong fort which crowned its summit. Then turning to the north-west, it crossed the slight dip through which the main road from Clifton passes to the city, and reascended to the height where the stately 'Royal Fort' House now stands; there Fiennes established a small fort known as Windmill Fort. This portion proved to be the weakest part of the lines, though it was strengthened by a small redoubt called Essex Fort. From the Windmill Fort the rampart continued across St. Michael's Hill and along the whole length of the crest of the height of Kingsdown to a fort at the extreme end of the ridge known as Prior's Hill, now Nine Tree Hill. This point, which commanded the low lands to Lawford's Gate and the Avon, as well as the pass through which ran the nearest road to Gloucester and the north, was looked upon by both sides as the key to the position, and was very strongly entrenched. Between it and the Windmill Fort was another small redoubt where 'Colston's Fort' House now stands. At Prior's Hill the line of defence turned sharply to the south-east, and, crossing the Frome, reached Lawford's Gate, the chief entrance to the town on the landward side. This gate, which stood at the east end of the castle precincts, was strongly fortified, and from it the line

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**Bristol** was carried southward to terminate on the bank of the Avon at a point opposite Tower Harritz, where the old wall of the southern suburb commenced. No attempt was made to strengthen the fortifications south of the Avon, partly because the thirteenth-century wall there was both strong and in good repair, but partly, no doubt, because the possession of the district of Redcliffe and Temple Fee was of no advantage to an attacking force, consisting as it did of a low-lying maze of lanes completely covered by the older town and the castle on the northern bank, from which it was separated by a deep and rapid tidal river, or at low water by still more impassable mud-banks, with, for the only means of communication, a long narrow bridge encumbered by lofty timber-framed houses.

In the meantime, Fiennes's position in the city was not an easy one. Though he took the precaution of removing all the clergy, who were Royalists almost to a man, from the city and putting Puritans into their pulpits, there was yet a strong body of loyalist opinion; and this was joined by some disaffected adherents of Essex, and in March 1642 a plot was formed, under the leadership of Robert Yeomans, a merchant of character and position, to seize the Frome Gate and open it to Prince Rupert: it is said that there were no fewer than 2000 men engaged in the conspiracy. In accordance with the arrangement, Rupert appeared on Durdham Down with a force of 6000 men; but there was the usual informer among the conspirators, and on the eve of March 7, the day fixed for its

execution, the plot was discovered and the ringleaders seized. Yeomans and his lieutenant, George Boucher, or Butcher, were tried by court-martial and condemned to be hanged, and the sentence was carried out on the 30th of May following. Fiennes was severely censured for this execution by members of his own party as well as by Royalists, but it is difficult to see how he could have acted otherwise if he wished to maintain his authority.

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The long-expected siege began on July 22 of the same year, when the whole country south-west of Bristol had been swept clear of Parliamentary troops. Prince Rupert, who commanded the besieging army, had under him a force of 14,000 men, against which Fiennes could only oppose 2500, including townsmen. After two or three days of ineffectual skirmishing a general assault was ordered on July 26, and the lines were attacked on all sides; the main attack was upon Prior's Hill Fort, which was defended by the gallant Blake, afterwards the great Puritan admiral. He beat off his assailants time after time with great loss, and the Royalists were foiled too in their attack on the Somerset side. In the meantime Colonel Washington, who commanded on the north-west side, was more successful. He discovered the weak point in the line between Brandon Hill and the Windmill Fort, and with 300 men effected a breach near the site of the present 'Blind Asylum,' and drove back the few defenders; then having waited to level the rampart and obtain reinforcements he swept down the hillside and occupied College

**Bristol** Green with the cathedral and other buildings surrounding it, and the day was gained. Fiennes decided, probably wisely, that once the lines were pierced it was useless to attempt to hold the city, and he arranged its surrender on sufficiently favourable terms, which were not entirely observed by the other side. In the hurry of the moment neither Blake at Prior's Hill Fort nor Captain Husbands, who held Brandon Hill, was informed of the surrender, and they continued their resistance till the next day. Rupert's victory was complete, and he found a large store of ammunition and provisions in the town; it was not, however, lightly won, for he lost upwards of 500 men, including several valuable officers. Fiennes was impeached before a council of war, convicted of cowardice, and condemned to death. He was, however, pardoned by Lord Essex, but dismissed the army. It is right to add that neither Fairfax nor Cromwell considered him to blame for the surrender.

The capture of Bristol put fresh heart into the Royalist side; the king, who was then at Oxford, ordered a public thanksgiving, and hurried to Bristol, where he was lodged in Small Street, probably in the Norman house which is now the Law Library. He attended a thanksgiving service in the cathedral, and signed a pardon to the mayor and burgesses, from whom he obtained £50,000 in cash, and an undertaking to clothe 1500 officers and men of the king's army. He also settled a bitter dispute between Prince Rupert and Sir Ralph Hopton over the com-

mand of the captured city, by appointing Rupert governor, with Hopton as lieutenant-governor. At this time the Royalist cause was at its brightest, and it seemed as if history were about to repeat itself with Bristol at the head of an undisputed kingdom in the west. The resemblance to the state of things five centuries before was increased by the fact that the young Prince of Wales took up his abode here in March 1644. With the disastrous defeat of Naseby the royal prospects faded, and Rupert hurried back to Bristol to prepare for a siege. He adopted the lines of Fiennes, but strengthened them considerably, especially by building a very strong fort, the Royal Fort, on the Windmill Hill site. He also threw in abundance of stores and ammunition, and a garrison of 5000 men. Like his predecessor he had continually to complain of want of money, and his exactions from the wretched citizens were even more oppressive than Fiennes's, reducing the majority of the population to beggary. Before the attacking army drew near, Rupert was able to burn Clifton, Bedminster, and the College at Westbury-on-Trym, so as to deprive it of much-needed shelter. He was, however, foiled in his attempt to pursue the same course in the case of the villages to the east of the city by the timely appearance of General Ireton with 2000 cavalry, and he neglected to cut down the hedges and fill in the ditches outside the lines, leaving them to form a useful cover for his opponents.

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On August 25 Fairfax arrived from the south



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with the main body of troops, and so important was the occasion deemed that, in addition to Ireton, he was accompanied by Cromwell, Fleetwood, and Skippon. They slept that night at Keynsham, about four miles above the city, and the next day most of the troops crossed the Avon into Gloucestershire. On August 23 the town was invested on all sides, and by the capture of Portishead at the mouth of the Avon Fairfax obtained the command of the river, and was able to prevent supplies and reinforcements coming in from Ireland. The siege which ensued bore a curious resemblance to that by which Rupert had two years earlier gained possession of the city. On several days the defenders made sorties in force, but were always driven back with some loss, and on the other hand the besiegers began to play with their great guns upon Prior's Hill Fort. At last, on September 2, it was decided at a council of war to storm the town, but before this design was carried into execution negotiations were opened between Fairfax and Rupert with a view to surrender. Rupert asked for time to communicate with the king, which was refused, and then on September 7, proposed such terms as could not possibly be accepted. Fairfax seems to have come to the conclusion that the prince was only trying to gain time, and two days later wrote to insist upon his original propositions, which were rejected. At 2 A.M. the following day, everything being in readiness, the signal was given by a bonfire, and the attack began on all sides. On the Somerset side, where probably it was not seriously

intended, it failed. The main attack as before was upon the Prior's Hill Fort, and after several hours' desperate fighting this fell to Colonels Rainsborough and Hammond, nearly all the garrison being killed. In the meantime Colonel Montague and Colonel Pickering obtained possession of Lawford's Gate, and made a way for Desborough with the cavalry to enter the lines, and penetrate as far as the castle, where he obtained possession of one of the gates to the walled town. By this time the whole eastern side of the defences lay open, and finding further resistance useless Rupert consented to parley. The city was now in flames in several places, and Fairfax agreed to treat on condition that the fires were extinguished by the garrison. This was done, and terms were arranged the same evening, which were not unfavourable to Rupert, who marched out the next day with arms and colours, and with a safe-conduct to any Royalist garrison he should choose within fifty miles of Bristol. The loss of Bristol was a grievous blow to the king, who greeted Rupert angrily, 'You assured me that if no mutiny happened you would keep Bristol four months—did you keep it four days?' However, after a court-martial held at Newark in October, Charles acknowledged that Prince Rupert was not guilty of any the least want of courage or fidelity to him, and the court gave the same opinion. In fact, Rupert and Fiennes were each justified by the failure of the other; the lines were too extended to be held against a large, resolute, and well-equipped army by the scanty garrison that each possessed.

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Fairfax found the city in a deplorable condition. Of the 12,500 inhabitants who remained within the walls at the beginning of the year not fewer than 3000 had perished from the plague, and the survivors are said to have looked more like prisoners than citizens; while the town was so filthy that it was not safe to enter it till it had been cleansed. He found, however, 140 cannon and a plentiful supply of powder, and his total loss was only about 200 men. Skippon was left in command as governor, and he again removed the loyal clergy, and refilled the pulpits with Puritans. He also expelled the mayor and such aldermen as he could not trust, and replaced them by his own partisans. A subsequent mayor was the first to proclaim, in 1648, that there was no king in England, and that the successors to Charles I. were traitors to the State; the Lord Mayor of London had previously refused to issue the proclamation.

Cromwell spent some time in Bristol in 1649 on his way to Ireland, and in 1651 Charles II. passed through the town as a fugitive in disguise. He spent some days in concealment at Abbot's Leigh, and is said to have endangered the party by insisting on turning out of his way to inspect the Royal Fort, which had been in process of erection on the occasion of his previous visit.

Bristol soon showed its usual power of recuperation, and now entered on a period of great prosperity. It was able to entertain Charles II. and his queen right royally in 1663; and when, in 1668, Pepys

made his memorable tour to the west of England, he found it in every respect another London. He visited the quay, which he found large and noble, and inspected the frigate of eleven hundred tons, the largest vessel hitherto constructed in Bristol, which was then building for the king and which was launched the next year. He found 'the uncle of my wife's maid Deb., who was a man of no mark, so like one of our sober, wealthy London merchants as pleased me mightily.' Deb.'s uncle regaled him with strawberries, venison-pasty, plenty of brave wine, and, above all—Bristol milk.

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The source of this renewed prosperity was in part the trade with Spain, especially the import of its wines, but chiefly the practical monopoly which its geographical position gave Bristol of the West India trade. This led to the sugar refining industry becoming located here: already in 1653 Evelyn first saw sugar refined and cast into loaves at Bristol, and for two hundred years it was the chief manufacture of the place. A less legitimate but even more remunerative development of the West India trade was the traffic in negro slaves. Bristol ships used to sail for the Guinea coast, take in there a human cargo, and after disposing of those victims who survived the terrors of the voyage at Jamaica or St. Kitts, return laden with sugar, rum, tobacco, and other products of the islands. The slave-trade was not entirely confined to black skins: it is said, and probably correctly, that many kidnapped children were sent to the plantations, and it seems certain

**Bristol** that the mayor and justices used to compound with small offenders by means of threats of excessive penalties to induce them to work in their own plantations in the West Indies in a condition indistinguishable from slavery. This was so notorious that when Judge Jeffreys was in Bristol on the Bloody Assize in 1685, he took occasion in his charge to administer a sharp and violent reproof to the mayor, Sir W. Hayman, and others. It must have produced a strange impression on the spectators in the old Guildhall, and one suggestive of Satan rebuking sin, when the infamous judge suddenly began: 'Sir, Mr. Mayor, you I mean, kidnapper, and an old justice of the peace on the bench, I do not know him, an old knave: he goes to the tavern, and for a pint of sack will bind people servants to the Indies at the tavern. A kidnapping knave! I will have his ears off before I go forth out of the town.' Then, turning again to the mayor: 'Kidnapper! You I mean, sir; do you see the keeper of Newgate? If it were not in respect of your sword which is over your head, I would send you to Newgate, you kidnapping knave. You are worse than the pick-pocket who stands there. I hope you are men of worth; I will make you pay sufficiently for it.' He kept his word, for he presently fined the mayor £100.

The year 1671 was rendered noteworthy by the issue of Millerd's accurate and interesting map or plan of the city as it existed at that date. It shows that the town was still confined pretty much to the area it occupied when William Worcester wrote,

but that the monastic gardens on the north and the castle site in the centre had become covered with houses; there had been little if any growth south of the Avon. The population, which in 1607 was 10,549, had now it is supposed risen to about 29,000 souls. Millerd received from the corporation the thanks of the house, with a piece of plate to the value of £10.

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The local history during the reign of Charles II. is chiefly an account of the disgraceful persecution of the Nonconformists, and of the great growth of the Dissenting bodies under its stimulus. It is fair to say that as early as the days of the Commonwealth the Dissenters had set the example by persecuting each other: Baptists falling foul of Quakers, and Presbyterians, with all the arrogance of an established church, attempting to suppress all free opinion. For some years after the Restoration the Dissenting bodies were little interfered with, and at the enforcement of the Conventicle Act the three bodies already mentioned, as well as the Independents, possessed recognised meeting-houses in Bristol. From this date, however, the hunting of Nonconformists became the chief business of many of the highly placed citizens, who had the direct encouragement of the bishop of the diocese. An interesting account of the persecution, and of the shifts the preachers were put to to avoid arrest, may be read in the *Broadmead Records*, written by an eye-witness and sufferer, Edward Terrill. During the mayoralty of Sir John Knight alone 920 Nonconformists suffered fine and

**Bristol** imprisonment for conscience' sake. This Sir John Knight, who had himself been a Presbyterian, was one of five prominent citizens of the same name who gave further point to the sneer of the Recorder, Sir Robert Atkyns, that the City Council was 'full of trade and knighthood': it contained two baronets and no less than twelve knights, including the learned Recorder himself. The persecution abated on the advent of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., to power: a Dissenter himself, he hoped that the Protestant Nonconformists would make common cause with their equally oppressed Roman Catholic brethren.

In 1683 the corporation of Bristol shared the fate of the other municipal corporations. At the beginning of that year a writ of *quo warranto* was brought into the Court of King's Bench against the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of Bristol, calling them to answer by what warrant they claim to be a corporation after having broken their charter. In answer, the corporation resigned the charter and threw themselves on the king's mercy. They received a fresh charter on June 2, 1684, which embodied the provisions of the earlier documents, but in which the king, who nominated the members of the new council, reserved to the Crown the right of removing the members and officers of the corporation. This right was exercised by James II., to his cost, when in 1687 he removed the Tory members of the corporation and substituted for them men in sympathy with the Dissenters.

The seizure of Bristol, where he had many sympathisers, was Monmouth's first aim in his rebellion, and he advanced as near as Keynsham; but though the streets were filled with excited crowds, shouting for Monmouth and the Protestant religion, the prompt and vigorous measures of the Duke of Beaufort, Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, who hastened to the city with twenty-eight companies of foot soldiers, prevented any rising, and Monmouth, foiled, retired to meet with defeat at Sedgemoor, and death on Tower Hill. After the rebellion was quelled Judge Jeffreys visited Bristol on assize, and sentenced six men to death for high treason, three of whom were reprieved, while about four hundred were sentenced to transportation. It was on this occasion that the judge delivered his memorable harangue to the mayor, which has already been quoted.

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Though the Duke of Monmouth obtained no active support in Bristol, it was not on account of any affection for the king; and on the arrival of William of Orange the majority of men of both parties declared for him, and he obtained possession of the town without bloodshed, though a 'No Popery' mob plundered the houses of the Catholic citizens. William spent a night at the house of Sir E. Southwell at King's Weston hard by, but did not enter the city. Queen Anne paid a visit to Bristol in 1702, when she was staying in Bath. She was at Bath again in the following year, and as she did not on that occasion come to Bristol the corporation of the



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poor sent twelve persons to her to be touched for the King's Evil; the result of the treatment is not recorded. On July 24, 1710, the queen granted to the town its last charter, under which it was governed till the passing of the Municipal Corporations Reform Act of 1835. By this charter she confirmed all former privileges, and renounced the objectionable right to remove the officers and members of the council at her pleasure.

The eighteenth-century history of Bristol presents little of general interest, but it was a period of unbounded prosperity, and during its earlier years the old, huddled town of timber-framed houses was completely surrounded by a new, well-built, and handsome city of brick and stone. The new town was laid out with great care, and a wise provision was made for fresh air by planning numerous squares, the earliest of which, called Queen Square, in honour of Queen Mary, wife of William III., is one of the largest and noblest in the kingdom. In 1736 a colossal equestrian statue in bronze of William III. (No. 3 on plan) was placed in the centre of the square, chiefly at the cost of the corporation and the Merchant Venturers' Company. The sculptor was Rysbrach, and the statue is one of the most successful of such memorials in the country.

The men of Bristol had not lost the old spirit of adventure: in the eighteenth century it took the form of fitting out privateers for the wars which were waged almost incessantly during that period. The earliest as well as the most famous of these priva-

teering expeditions was that which sailed under Captain Woodes Rogers in 1708. Two vessels, the *Duke* of thirty guns, and the *Duchess* carrying twenty, were bought and equipped by sixteen merchants, some of whom belonged to the Society of Friends. Second in command was Dr. Thomas Dover, a physician, and a shareholder in the expedition, who became celebrated as the inventor of the powder which bears his name, and which still holds its own as a valuable medicament; and the famous navigator Dampier sailed as pilot. The expedition sailed round Cape Horn into the Pacific, stormed Guayaquil, captured several prizes, and finally returned home by the Cape of Good Hope, having circumnavigated the globe in about two years. They brought back with them no less than £170,000 in treasure and prizes, and brought back also Alexander Selkirk, the original of Robinson Crusoe, whom they had found on the island of Juan Fernandez, where he had been living alone for upwards of four years. Selkirk spent some time in Bristol, and it is said, though on no reliable authority, that he met Daniel Defoe here at the old 'Cock and Bottle' Tavern, and that he supplied him with details of his adventures. The success of Rogers's expedition led to a great increase of privateering, which reached its height during the Seven Years' War. In 1757 there were forty-one such vessels belonging to the port of Bristol, carrying from 1200 to 1400 guns, and manned by about 7500 hands. By the next year the number had increased to fifty-one. Many of them

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**Bristol** were successful, but on the whole the losses probably exceeded the gains, and though such enterprises were not altogether discontinued till the end of the century the merchants soon reverted to a more healthy form of business.

In 1761 the British merchants petitioned for the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act, and in 1774 the electors, in a rare fit of large-mindedness, chose Edmund Burke as their Parliamentary representative. He was proposed by Richard Champion, the founder of the Bristol china manufactory, and seconded by Joseph Harford, a member of a family still deservedly held in honour. His independent conduct, however, and especially his exertions in favour of freedom of religion and trade in Ireland, alienated his constituents, and the alliance which had begun so honourably was short-lived, terminating at the general election of 1780.

After a long period of quiet progress but of little general interest, Bristol was once more to play a prominent and not too creditable part in the general history of the country. The local mob had always been notorious for its turbulence, especially when reinforced, as it usually was when there was any likelihood of fighting and plunder, by the rough and uncivilised miners from Kingswood Forest. There had been serious riots attended with bloodshed and loss of life on the occasion of the celebration of the accession of George I. and George II., and again in 1793, when the public authorities broke faith with the public by continuing the toll on Bristol Bridge,

on which occasion eleven men and women lost their lives, and about fifty were seriously wounded ; but all these were thrown into the shade by the rioting which broke out here, as at many other towns, in connection with the agitation which sprang up on the rejection of the Reform Bill in 1831, and its reintroduction after the general election in that year. The eccentric but able Sir Charles Wetherell, who led the bitter and obstinate opposition to that measure in the House of Commons, was the Recorder of Bristol, and only a year before, on account of his leaving the Duke of Wellington's administration to oppose Catholic Emancipation, had been the idol of the mob, which was Protestant to a man. He was now the most unpopular man in the country, and nowhere more so than in Bristol, since he asserted, in the face of a petition in favour of the Bill containing 12,000 signatures, that there was a reaction in that city against Reform. As Recorder it was his duty to hold the usual autumn gaol delivery on October 29, but in consequence of the excited state of the population some of the leading citizens made representations to the Home Office suggesting that the assize should be postponed, which might, from the state of the calendar, have been done without much inconvenience. Lord Melbourne, the Home Secretary, however, declined to interfere ; but some slight precautions were taken. A few soldiers, two troops of the 14th Dragoons and one of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, were sent down under Colonel Brereton to be at the disposal of the magistrates, with the express understanding

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**Bristol** that they were not to be called in except in case of necessity; a large number of citizens, including some undesirable characters, were enrolled as special constables, and the Radical Member for the city, Mr. Protheroe, undertook to accompany the Recorder. An attempt to enroll the sailors of the port as special constables was unsuccessful, the seamen replying to the proposal by a resolution 'that they would not allow themselves to be made a cat's-paw of by the corporation.'

Sir Charles made a public entry into the city in the forenoon of Saturday, October 29, and was driven in the sheriff's carriage, escorted by special constables, through a noisy and violent crowd to the Guildhall, which he reached in safety, but with no little difficulty, some of his guard being severely injured by stones. At the Guildhall the Commission was opened with the usual ceremony, but amid much interruption, and the court was immediately adjourned till Monday, 31st. During the short journey from the hall to the Mansion House, on the north side of Queen Square, the disturbances were renewed, but the Recorder reached his destination without injury, though the lamps of the carriage were broken by a volley of stones. Once within he was besieged by a noisy crowd of men and boys, from 1500 to 2000 in number, kept at bay by a body of constables, brave and energetic, but without organisation or responsible head. From half-past twelve till four, however, they managed to maintain some kind of order, but at that hour half their

number, unfortunately, were ordered to retire for refreshment and to reassemble at the Guildhall at six. In the meantime the mob had become yet more infuriated by the death of one of their number from a blow on the head from the truncheon of one of the special constables, and the weakening of the guard gave the signal for a really serious attack on the Mansion House. At this juncture the mayor, Mr. Charles Pinney, himself a reformer, came to the front of the Mansion House with some of the magistrates, and addressed the crowd, begging them to retire quietly and not to compel him to read the Riot Act and call in the military. The reply was a volley of stones and iron railings, and at five o'clock the Riot Act was read and the troops sent for. This was the signal for a renewed attack on the Mansion House, and the rioters obtained possession of its ground floor. At this time Sir C. Wetherell made his escape from the roof and gained a neighbouring house by means of a ladder, and managed to leave the town undiscovered in the disguise of a postillion. The mob now attempted to fire the Mansion House, but it was saved for a time by the arrival of the soldiers. Colonel Brereton was informed that the Riot Act had been read, and that he must use whatever force was necessary to clear the streets and restore the peace. He however would not use force, and contented himself with riding up and down the square, shaking hands with the rioters and entreating them to disperse, when vigorous action would probably have saved the situation. At

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Bristol last the Town Clerk asked him plainly whether he had received any orders which prevented him from obeying those he had received from the magistrates, and distinctly ordered him to clear the streets. Then at last, late at night, a charge was commanded, the square and the streets were cleared, and the town became comparatively quiet; but pickets of troops were left all night at the Mansion House and the Council House.

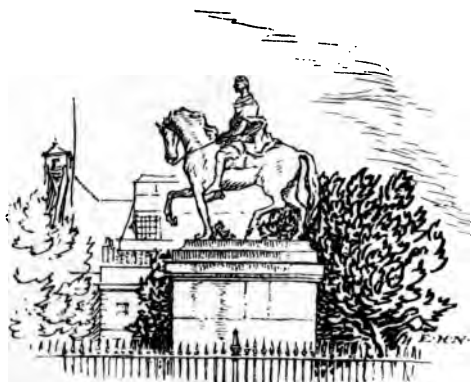
The next day, Sunday, opened quietly; but the guard was most unwisely removed from the Mansion House, which was again immediately attacked and captured, the mayor and other occupants escaping with difficulty. Its contents were destroyed and its rich cellars of wine plundered, and the mob became infuriated with drink. Colonel Brereton now refused to fire upon the rioters, urging that it would be better to wait for reinforcements, and he removed most of the soldiers from the city, which was given over entirely to the mob, which was increased by a number of colliers from Kingswood. The three prisons—Bridewell, the new City Gaol, and the Gloucester County Prison at Lawford's Gate—were next attacked, the prisoners released, and the buildings fired. Then the Bishop's Palace was set on fire, and an attempt was made to burn the cathedral, though this was frustrated, one account says, by the exertions of the verger, another by the efforts and persuasions of five respectable citizens, all of whom were Dissenters. Before night the Mansion House, the Custom House, and nearly half the houses

in Queen Square were in flames, and the shipping in the floating harbour was in imminent danger of burning. At length, early on the morning of Monday, the 31st, energetic steps were taken to restore order: the dragoons were brought back and were joined by a few yeomanry, other troops came in from Gloucester, the mob was repeatedly charged, and the riot was over. The Mansion House, the Custom House, the Palace, three gaols, four toll-houses, and forty-two private houses had been destroyed, and a large but uncertain number of lives were lost. These were chiefly rioters overtaken by the flames when engaged in plunder: it is said that at least fifty perished at the Custom House alone. Four of the rioters were executed, and a large number sentenced to transportation; on the other hand, Colonel Brereton and the mayor were put on their trial, the former by court-martial, the latter before the Court of King's Bench. Colonel Brereton committed suicide during the trial, but the mayor was honourably acquitted: his defence was that the citizens refused to confide in or assist the magistrates, and that consequently, deserted as they were by their fellow-citizens, they could not have acted more efficiently; and the jury gave it as their opinion that in a situation of great difficulty, and when deserted by those from whom he was entitled to expect aid and encouragement, he had conducted himself with great firmness and propriety. The citizens were punished for their apathy by having to pay a special rate of ten

Bristol  
under  
later  
Sovereigns



Bristol shillings in the pound to defray the cost of the damage.



STATUE OF WILLIAM III.

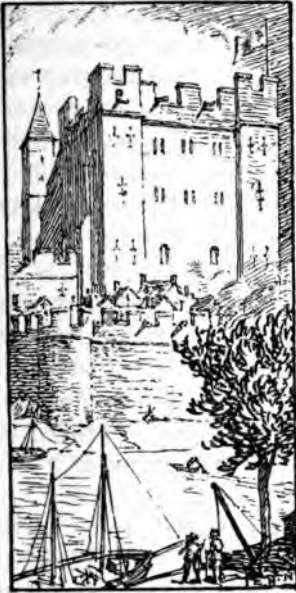




ST. JOHN'S CHURCH AND GATE

## CHAPTER V

### THE CASTLE AND THE WALLS—EARLY HARBOUR WORKS



THE CASTLE

THE casual visitor to Bristol will not find it easy to realise that the city was the seat of a large and famous castle which was in existence so recently as 1656, so thoroughly was the process of 'slighting' carried out under Cromwell's orders, and so completely has the town overgrown its site. Still even now the careful explorer may trace its limits with a fair degree of certainty, and may even find some scanty but not uninteresting fragments of the fortress above ground. Moreover, with the help of Worcester's description, and some early

Bristol drawings, notably that engraved in Millerd's great map, it is possible to form a fair general idea of the plan and arrangement of the castle, and even an approximately correct picture of its appearance at the time of its greatness.

Stow says that the Saxon King Edward the Elder built a castle at the mouth of the Avon in the year 915, and some writers have suggested that this was at Bristol. If this were so, it has utterly disappeared, both from the earth and from history; but there is no reason to believe that any castle was erected before the town was held by the militant Bishop Geoffrey of Coutance at the close of the Conqueror's reign, and it is not mentioned in Domesday Book. The Bishop of Coutance certainly built a castle which occupied the position on the neck of the peninsula, to the east of the walled town, which afterwards formed the site of the later and greater fortress. Geoffrey's castle, like most of those of early Norman origin, probably consisted of an earthen mound and base court defended by stockades, but without any masonry: had it been of stone, it is not likely that it would have been completely replaced in less than thirty years. Yet it proved to be a fortress of great strength, and formed a base for the unsuccessful rising of the Norman lords, in favour of Robert of Normandy, against Rufus. The next lord of Bristol, Robert Fitz-Hamon, lived chiefly at Cardiff, and was responsible for no work at Bristol; and the castle as we know it was probably almost entirely the work of his son-in-law, the great

Earl Robert of Gloucester. Robert took in the whole of the isthmus from cliff to cliff, cutting it off from the town and the mainland by two deep ditches, and enclosing the area by a strong wall fortified by towers and bastions; and at a point opposite to the town he built on a great mound, probably that of the earlier work, a mighty rectangular keep, of the type of that at Rochester, second to scarcely any in the kingdom. He also removed the adjacent section of the town wall, not so much that the castle should form part of the general line of defence, as that it should completely overawe the townsmen.

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Almost before it was finished, in the early years of Henry 1., it received Robert of Normandy, the first of a line of royal and noble prisoners to be secluded in its walls. Of the part it played in the strife between Stephen and the Empress Maud, and how King Stephen himself was its involuntary tenant for nearly a year, we have already read. It proved far too important to be intrusted to a subject, and under John it became a royal castle, and remained in the hands of the Crown until the days of Charles 1. In 1202 the ill-fated Maid of Brittany, sister of the murdered Prince Arthur, entered it as a prisoner, and for forty long years she lived here, kindly treated but under the strictest surveillance. The castle took a part in the Barons' War, and soon afterwards received as a prisoner Eleanor, daughter of Simon de Montfort, who was captured by a Bristol ship when on her way to Wales to join her

**Bristol** betrothed husband, Prince Llewellyn. It sheltered a more illustrious prisoner when, for a short space before the tragedy of Berkeley, Edward II. was confined within its walls. When in the reign of Edward III. Bristol was made a borough and county, the castle with its precincts was not included within the extended boundary, and remained till long after a portion of the county of Gloucester. In a later charter, by which Henry VI. granted to the mayor and corporation the revenues of the town, the castle was expressly excluded. As a result, a new and disorderly town, acknowledging no local jurisdiction and possessing its own market, sprang up between the castle and Lawford's Gate to the east, which became an Alsatia, a resort of thieves, malefactors, and other disorderly livers, and such a public nuisance that in 1630 Charles I. by charter annexed the whole to the city. The next year the corporation purchased the castle itself, subject to certain reversions, for the sum of £959, and three years later by a payment of £520 they bought up the reversionary interests and entered into possession.

Under the Lancastrian kings this, like many other royal castles such as Richmond and Leicester, was allowed to fall into a state of disrepair, and when Worcester wrote his description the residential portion had become an utter ruin, 'now naked and uncovered, void of planchers and roofing.' The dwelling of the constable, too, was all pulled down and ruinous. In this condition it remained when Leland visited it about the year 1535, and said of it,

‘there be many towres yet standynge in both the courtes, but alle tendith to ruine.’ Afterwards, houses and other buildings were permitted to be erected in the enclosure, and when it was taken over by the corporation it contained fifty-three dwellings. On obtaining possession, the city authorities built an armoury with a guard-room, and soon after, when hostilities broke out, they proceeded to put the castle in a state of defence. The keep was repaired and found capable of bearing heavy guns. During the two sieges which ensued, the castle was used as the headquarters of the respective governors, but it did not take any active part in the fighting, and no attempt was made to hold it when the outer lines of defence were pierced. With the second siege its history ended. In December 1655 an order was received by the town to *slight* it, but for some reason this was not carried out immediately; but in May 1656, in consequence of the receipt of a peremptory command from Cromwell, it was destroyed, and the work of destruction is said to have been accomplished in the incredibly short space of a fortnight. Across the site from gate to gate the corporation drove a new street, Castle Street, so that once more after a lapse of six centuries the town obtained a direct and easy approach from the mainland. The area soon became covered with streets, courts, and houses, among which the scanty fragments of the old building which were permitted to remain above ground have to be searched for by the curious inquirer.

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Earl Robert took for the site of his castle, as probably did Coutance before him, the whole width of the isthmus from Avon to Frome. This he proceeded to isolate by digging two ditches: the one towards the town, a dry ditch, was a little to the east of St. Peter's Church; the other, towards the open country, was broader, deeper, and wet; it united the two rivers from whose tide it received its water. The former ditch has long been obliterated, the latter still exists, though it is now covered in. It lies for part of its course under the street now known as Lower Castle Street, formerly as Castle Ditch. The steep cliffs above the two rivers Earl Robert strengthened by revetments or massive retaining walls, and from within their parapets rose the strong and lofty enclosure walls of the castle, strengthened by numerous towers and bastions. The area thus enclosed, about three and a half acres in extent, was divided by a cross wall running north and south into two wards, an upper or outer, and a lower or inner. The former occupied the higher ground on the side towards the city, while the latter, which was somewhat larger, was to the east of the dividing wall. There was a third ward or out-work, called by Worcester a bastile, beyond the great ditch; but this, which was known as the King's Orchard, was probably a later addition. Within the outer ward, on the highest ground in the fortress, the Earl built a great rectangular keep. Of this nothing remains, and its exact position is not absolutely known; but Worcester's description, together with Millerd's view, enable us to form a very fair idea of

its size and appearance. Unfortunately in this instance only of all the buildings described by Worcester, he was unable to make his own measurements, and had to content himself with those supplied by the porter; and granting the accuracy of these, it is not possible to determine the exact points at which they were taken. This keep is generally described as having been second only to those of London and Colchester, but it evidently belonged rather to the same type of tower as that at Rochester; that is to say, its height was perceptibly greater than its other dimensions. It was oblong in plan, measuring 60 feet from east to west and 45 from north to south, and its walls at the base had the enormous thickness of 25 feet, which diminished to 9 feet 6 inches at the summit. If, as is probable, the porter's figures represented the internal dimensions at the roof level, we may picture to ourselves a tower of about 80 feet by 65, rising sheer from a boldly battering base to a height of more than 100 feet. The four angle turrets seem to have been of much bolder projection than was usual in Norman keeps, and, according to Worcester, one of them rose six fathoms above the parapet of the tower; this seems to be a mistake, but there is reason to suppose that Worcester's 'fathom' was much smaller than the modern measure of that designation. The keep had three, or perhaps four, stories above the basement; in Millerd's view the lower portion is concealed by houses. The visible portion shows two upper stages, with three small coupled windows in each face, and a lower one which

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**Bristol** has two large plain round-headed openings. The entrance was probably on the first floor above the basement; there seems to have been no fore-building to protect it, but from the evidence of early seals it appears that it was approached by an outer gateway. The outer ward contained, in addition to the keep, the constable's house and the garrison church, or church of St. Martin; their very ruins, too, have perished.

The inner ward was larger than the outer, but lower and less strongly defended by Nature. It sloped gently down towards the ditch at the east, and near its eastern margin was placed the palace, some slight portion of which is still to be seen. This contained a great hall, a withdrawing-room or principal chamber, a chapel, and the usual offices. The hall was large, 108 feet in length by just half that number in width. It was divided into nave and aisles by two rows of massive baulks or 'sparres' of timber, like the still existing hall at Leicester; there were apparently ten of these on each side, and Worcester says that they were 43 feet in height. The side walls seem to have been low, only 14 feet high; if it is correct that the windows were also 14 feet long, they must have been surmounted by a long row of picturesque gables. To the north of the hall stood the principal chamber, 51 feet by 27, and to the south the kitchens. These buildings were Norman in style and date, as a still existing doorway proves, but in the thirteenth century a beautiful vaulted porch was added on the side facing the green, which still remains. At a date

a little, but not much, later a chapel was built, whose vaulted undercroft adjoins the porch just mentioned on its northern side. There is no indication of any later building. There were three main gateways to the castle : the chief entrance was that from the town to the outer ward, which stood at a point opposite to the end of St. Peter's Street, where Castle Street now begins. This was approached by a drawbridge, and further defended by a barbican in advance of the ditch. At the opposite side of the inner ward there was another great gatehouse leading to the open country. The third gateway was the Watergate, situated at the point where the great ditch joined the Avon ; this appears to have been formed by a strongly fortified group of towers, and is the gateway which is conventionally represented in the city arms. Outside the fortified enclosure, low down on the bank of the Frome, stood the castle mill, whose position is fixed by the street names, Castle Mill Street and Broad Weir.

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The following circuit may be recommended to the visitor who is curious to see the little that remains of this once celebrated pile. Leaving the High Cross by Wine Street and its eastward continuation, Narrow Wine Street, a slight dip or depression in the ground is approached, which marks the site of the ditch dividing the castle from the town. From this point Castle Mill Street descends steeply, clinging to the lofty escarpments. Its upper end was here formerly spanned by Newgate, once the only entrance to the city from the east, and later, like the more famous

**Bristol**    Newgate of London, a prison. Descending the Castle Mill Street, the 'Broad Weir' on the Frome is reached, but the river is now arched over and quite hidden. At this point lofty, grim, and blackened retaining walls may be seen on the right, which very well represent Earl Robert's work, even if the actual masonry is not his. They contain vaulted cellars or dungeons, which certainly formed a part of the Norman castle. Similar chambers, it may be mentioned here, still exist beneath the buildings overhanging the Avon. Now turning to the right along Lower Castle Street, the great wet ditch which formed the eastern boundary lies actually beneath our feet. It will be remembered that it connected the river Frome with the Avon, and it still exists, but its course is now for the most part underground. A small portion near its junction with the Avon remains open and may be seen from the bridge in Queen Street, a little lane leading south from Castle Street, as a black and forbidding canal far below. From this point the warehouses in Castle Street, which reach the edge of the cliff, block the outer circuit; and Castle Street, which traverses the whole enclosure near its southern boundary, must be followed. Though this street only dates from the days of the destruction of the castle in the time of Cromwell, yet it probably follows the line of an old thoroughfare through the enclosure from the east gate to that at the west. On reaching the site of the latter a narrow lane beneath a picturesque old house, timbered high with overhanging upper stories, leads once more to our original starting-

point. Now having made the complete circuit of the outer walls, let us follow the street facing us, known as Castle Green. This ascends a little, and at the top of the rise we are on the actual site of the keep, which was probably attached, on its northern side, to the wall of *enceinte*. Just beyond 'Cock and Bottle' Lane follows, more or less closely, the line of the dividing wall between the two wards. Castle Green now descends gently till it ends opposite a large school, in whose playground is a fragment of grey wall, which may be a portion of the early building. Turning here to the right, in Tower Street a Tudor doorway is seen, and just beyond a curious penthouse jutting out from the line of building. This marks the most important part of the building now remaining, the Early English porch to the old Norman Hall. Entering we find ourselves in a room 24 feet in length by 14 in breadth, and at present 13 feet in height. It is roofed in two divisions by a groined vault; the ribs of the roof are delicately moulded, and are carried by clustered vaulting shafts with graceful capitals of conventional foliage. The floor has been raised so that the bases of the shafts are concealed, and the whole interior is so encrusted with dirt and whitewash that the sharpness of the delicate detail is lost, but sufficient remains to show that the little building belongs to the most refined period of English Gothic art, the earlier half of the thirteenth century. At the end opposite the entrance may still be seen a large, but plain, round-arched doorway, the entrance to the Great Hall, a portion of the Earl of

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VAULTED ROOM IN CASTLE

Gloucester's building. Adjoining this apartment on its northern side is another room of almost precisely similar dimensions and arrangement, but a little later in date, and plainer and rougher in construction. Its vaulting ribs are simply chamfered instead of moulded,

and they spring from corbels instead of clustered shafts, without any carving. The east wall of this room, too, shows signs of Norman date, and a piscina and an ambrey in its north side points to a religious purpose. It was probably the crypt or undercroft of the royal chapel, which, there is reason to believe, was entirely reconstructed towards the end of the reign of Henry III. One other piece of early work remains to be mentioned. This is the so-called subterranean passage which runs beneath the school, and was probably a main drain which traversed the whole length of the castle and carried the sewage to the wet ditch, which was scavenged by the tide twice a day.

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Earlier than the castle were the walls enclosing the town, but they not only lasted longer, but have left a much more distinct impression on the topography of the city. Curiously enough, it is the earliest of the three lines of circumvallation whose influence is most marked. There seems no reason to doubt that Bristol was already an enclosed town at the time of the Norman Conquest, but there is as little reason to believe that the enclosure was other than an earthen rampart and a ditch. Messrs. Nicholls and Taylor are alone in their contention, in *Bristol, Past and Present*, and elsewhere, that the first wall was a Roman work; and the Anglo-Saxons, though they were not unwilling to utilise those of their predecessors, never themselves defended their town with walls of stone. The Saxon inhabitants of Bristol, probably as late as the tenth or even the eleventh century, then seem to have



**Bristol**    scarped the low hillside, and to have excavated a ditch where the presence of the river did not render the latter unnecessary, and to have thrown the earth inward to form a mound of considerable thickness, but of no great height. The lower end of the peninsula they further strengthened by making of the ditch a mill-leat, which carried most of the water of the Frome to the Avon. Such were the defences at the coming of the Normans, and the conquerors did not at first make any alteration in the plan of their predecessors. At an uncertain but early date, however, they faced the mound with stone and erected on it a wall of masonry, pierced by five gateways and one or two posterns. The short eastern section was soon removed, probably either by Bishop Geoffrey of Coutance or the Earl of Gloucester, when the erection of the castle rendered its retention not only unnecessary but unadvisable, and its exact position is uncertain; but the site of all the rest of the wall is determined with great accuracy by the position of the streets which follow the course of the external ditch and mill-leat, and by the narrow lane which closely hugged its inner side, forming the *pomærium* or open space at its foot, in whose course the existing fragments of the old wall may be seen. Starting at the summit of the cliff over the Avon, the wall descended along the line of the houses in Bridge Street to the south gate at the foot of High Street, upon which the chancel of the church of St. Nicholas was afterwards built. Then crossing High Street, the narrow St. Nicholas Street, formerly Collas Lane, marks its inner side. This bends round

to the bottom of Corn Street, where St. Leonard's Gate once stood. If now we cross Corn Street, an archway under an office opposite gives access to St. Leonard's Lane, with its high warehouses on the left on the site of the wall. Following this we reach Small Street, where stood another gate and another church. The wall, which up to this point had closely followed the course of the Frome, now left it, continuing to skirt the hillside. Still following the narrow passage, from this point known as Bell Lane, the foot of Broad Street, which is spanned by the one remaining mediæval gateway, St. John's Gate, is reached. This is not a part of the Norman work, having been completely rebuilt in the fourteenth century. It consisted originally of one narrow archway, through which the road rose steeply; in later years side arches have been added for the convenience of foot passengers. The outer arch was defended by a portcullis, whose groove or chase still remains, and the inner face is still adorned by statues of the fabled founders of the town, Brennus and Belinus. The gate is surmounted by the steeple which was common to the churches of St. John and St. Lawrence, both of which were built on the old wall. Continuing our course along the narrow lane, from this point known as Tower Street, a few yards bring us to the one piece of wall still visible. It is here about 9 feet 6 inches in thickness, and is pierced by a postern gate, a plain pointed arch. The wall now rapidly ascended the hill as far as the Pithay, a narrow street which until quite recently remained a complete and scarcely altered example of an Eliza-

**Bristol**    bethan street of half-timber construction. At the Pithay the lane we have followed so far comes to an end, but the wall seems to have crossed this street by the upper Pithay gateway, and then, bending toward the east, to have passed at the back of the houses in Wine Street and Narrow Wine Street, where it turned sharply to the south, and, crossing St. Peter Street to the east, or, as some think, to the west, of St. Peter's Church, it reached the Avon Bank at our starting-point, thus completing the circuit. The difference between the inner and outer levels is very marked, varying from about 14 feet between St. Nicholas Street and Baldwin Street to 4 feet at St. John's Gate. When Barrett published his *History* considerable portions of the wall remained, notably in St. Leonard's Lane, where even the battlements were preserved, and more recently excavations for new buildings have often uncovered its foundations. The circuit may be completed in a short quarter of an hour's walk, and the whole space enclosed did not exceed nineteen acres—a scanty beginning which, at the time of writing, has grown to at least as many square miles.

Very soon after the completion of the inner line of wall a second wall was added on the north-east side of the town: this is usually attributed to Bishop Geoffrey, and it was certainly not later than the days of Earl Robert. It added to the walled area the district known as the Pithay, the enclosure of the well, now almost covered by the works of Messrs. Fry; but its object was not so much to add to the size of the

town, the space gained being very small in proportion to the length of the new wall, as to improve the defences by utilising the river Frome, and to provide a new entrance from the east. When the castle was placed astride the isthmus which connected the town with the mainland it completely blocked the old and natural approach, and a new road had to be constructed. On reaching a point opposite the outer gate of the castle the road was diverted to the right by the side of the ditch, and across the Frome. It then turned to the left by the side of that river, and recrossing the stream below the Broad Weir, it climbed the steep and narrow ascent of Castle Mill Street, close under the walls of the fortress. At the top of the hill a new and strong gate, known as Newgate, was built adjoining the north-west angle of the castle which overshadowed it. From this point the new wall ran down the hillside to the left bank of the Frome, which flows under Fairfax Street, and then crossing the modern Union Street, it passed under the works of Messrs. Fry, where portions of it have been excavated, to the lower end of the Pithay, where there was a gate and a bridge. Then still following the course of the river, it reached Bridewell, where there was another gate, leading to Bridewell or Monken Bridge, and was continued to the Frome Bridge opposite to St. John's Gate, where it was defended by a very strong gate, the Frome Gate. From this point its course is uncertain, but it probably rejoined the old wall near the gateway at the foot of Small Street. This wall was very lofty,

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**Bristol** and from 8 to 10 feet in thickness, and was defended by massive towers, one of which was destroyed as recently as 1879 in making improvements at the Police Court in Bridewell Street. A portion of the wall still remains on the south side of Fairfax Street. The Frome Gate, which was to play an important part in later history, was very strong, and consisted of two separate gatehouses, one at each end of the bridge.

During the thirteenth century a very much larger area was added to the walled town. This was done in connection with an extensive scheme for the improvement of the harbour, which was carried to a successful completion in the year 1247. Up to that time the low-lying district to the south of the old town, now occupied by Queen Square and the adjacent streets, belonged to the manor of Billeswick, and formed part of the Canon's Marsh, the estate of the Abbey of St. Augustine, with which it was then directly continuous. In the year 1240 an agreement was entered into by Richard Aylward, the mayor, and William Bradeston, the Abbot of St. Augustine, by which this piece of land was transferred to the mayor and commonalty of Bristol in perpetuity for the purpose of making such a trench or harbour as should best serve their purpose, the convent reserving the strip of land on the west or outer bank of the new trench, but granting to the citizens free passage and access to their ships at all times, on the town undertaking to keep the bank in repair. The consideration for which the convent parted with their property does

not appear; the nine marks of silver mentioned in the agreement can only be looked on in the light of earnest-money, but as at this time the abbey became possessor of the Treen Mills below the town it is possible that there was an exchange of land. On this piece of land, near its western margin, the burgesses proceeded to construct a trench or canal, 40 yards in breadth and 18 feet in depth, extending in a straight line from a point on the Frome near the bottom of Small Street, due south to join the Avon, a distance of 800 yards. Into this trench the Frome was diverted, and its old course was filled up and a street formed on its site. This important work, which even at the present day would be thought no inconsiderable piece of engineering, was carried out in seven years at a cost of £5000, the burgesses supplying the labour; in this they were assisted by the men of Redcliffe, under a *mandamus* of Henry III. It is worthy of note that the mayor, Aylward, under whose rule the work was begun, was re-elected to the chief magistracy to witness its completion. The new channel, with its soft bottom and with spacious quays on each side, became and remained the favourite harbour, and though its northern portion has recently been covered in to form the open space known as Colston's Avenue, it still brings vessels of 1000 tons burden into the very centre of the city.

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As soon as the harbour works were completed, the burgesses fortified a large portion of the added area

**Bristol** with a wall. This third wall effected a junction with the original rampart near the point where the second one terminated, at the foot of Small Street. It was carried along the new course of the Frome, at the back of the quay, for about half its length. It then turned to the east, and crossed the marsh in a straight line parallel to the modern King Street, to terminate at the right bank of the Avon. It crossed the site now occupied by the Hall of the Merchant Venturers' Company, and passed close behind the St. Nicholas Almshouses. It was 6 feet in thickness, and strengthened by numerous towers, and was pierced by two gates, both in the southern portion: the one at the end of Marsh Street, and the other at the end of Back Street, not far from the Avon. No portion of this wall remains above ground, but its foundations have often been uncovered in building operations. The portion of land newly enclosed formed the parish of St. Stephen; many houses had long before been built there, and it soon became thickly populated. The low-lying land outside the wall, afterwards known as the town, or Bristol, Marsh, was planted with trees, and became for many generations the favourite place of outdoor recreations with the townsmen.

At about the same time a much larger area on the south side of the Avon was enclosed by a wall, and this also was done in connection with a public improvement. We have already seen that when the building of the stone bridge was begun in 1247 the waters of the Avon were temporarily diverted into an

artificial channel, which formed the base of the triangle which was occupied by the districts of Temple Fee and Redcliffe. When the completion of the bridge allowed the waters of the river to resume their old course, this channel was not entirely obliterated, but was retained as the ditch of a new and strong wall, which was built on its inner verge. This wall was the loftiest and strongest of all, and during the war of the Great Rebellion twice offered a successful resistance to the besiegers. This wall, too, has completely disappeared, but its course is marked by the line of the street which skirted its inner side. Starting at a strong tower, Tower Harritz, on the bank of the Avon in the Temple Back, it curved gently to the south-west along the south side of Pile Lane to Temple Street, close to the point where that street is crossed by the railway. Here stood the Temple Gate, which became the chief entrance to the city. At the Temple Gate the wall turned to the west and followed the course of Port-wall Lane, lying between it and Pyle Street, as far as Redcliffe Street, which it crossed a little north of the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, leaving the church still outside the walled area. From Redcliffe Gate the wall passed between Jones Street and Back Lane for a short distance, to terminate at Redcliffe Back at a tower overhanging the Avon. Both Temple and Redcliffe Gates were rebuilt in the eighteenth century. The former was a fine example of Renaissance architecture; it was not unlike Temple Bar, London, which had been rebuilt a little earlier: a substantial,

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**Bristol** heavily rusticated mass of masonry, having a lofty central arch and two roomy lateral archways for foot-passengers. It proved to be a great obstruction to traffic, and was removed in the year 1810. Redcliffe Gate was a building somewhat similar, but neither so handsome nor so well-proportioned; it was taken down to improve the street in 1788. It may be mentioned here that Frome Gate had already disappeared in 1694, Newgate in 1766, and the Bridge, or South Gate, at the foot of Broad Street, on the rebuilding of St. Nicholas' Church, in 1762. These additional defences brought the walled area of the town from the modest 19 acres of the early Bristol to the very respectable dimensions of about 335 acres.

One other defensive work remains to be mentioned. When in 1313 Bristol was in a state of open rebellion the town, as we have seen, lay completely exposed to the castle on the east; to remedy this the townsmen rebuilt the eastern section of wall, so as to shut off the town from the castle. The new wall did not occupy precisely the same position as its predecessor, but was a few yards to the west, where the modern Dolphin Street, long known as Defence Lane, now stands, leaving the church of St. Peter outside the town. This new wall, hastily constructed, was probably of no great strength, and was again destroyed when the rebellion was suppressed.

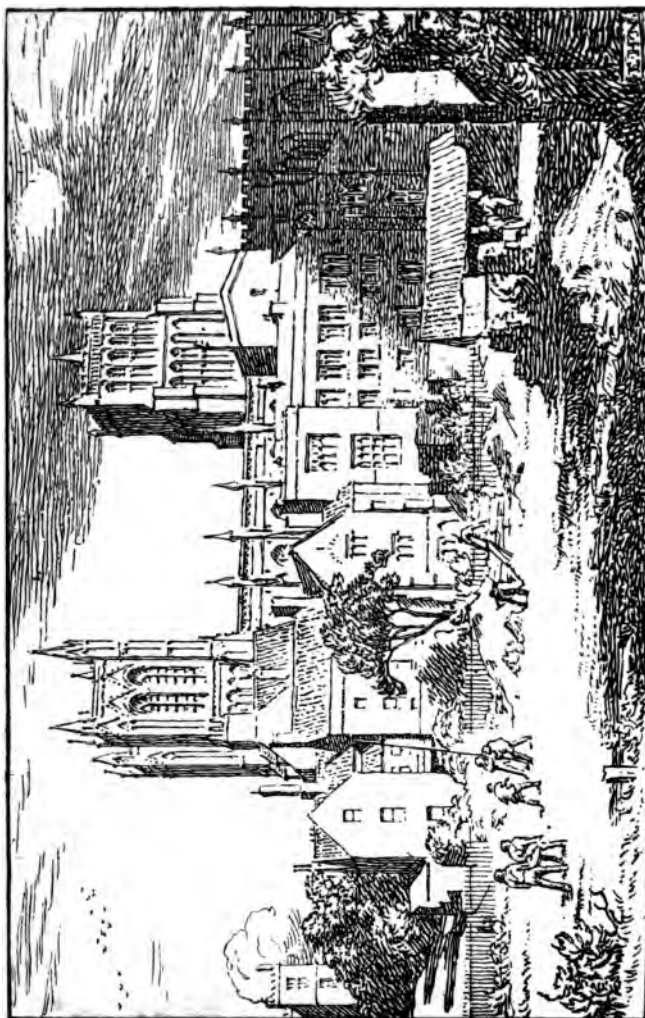
The later line of defence, thrown up during the Civil War in the seventeenth century, has already

been described in our chapter dealing with the general history of that period.

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Walls



TEMPLE GATE



ST. AUGUSTINE'S ABBEY

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ABBEY AND THE SEE



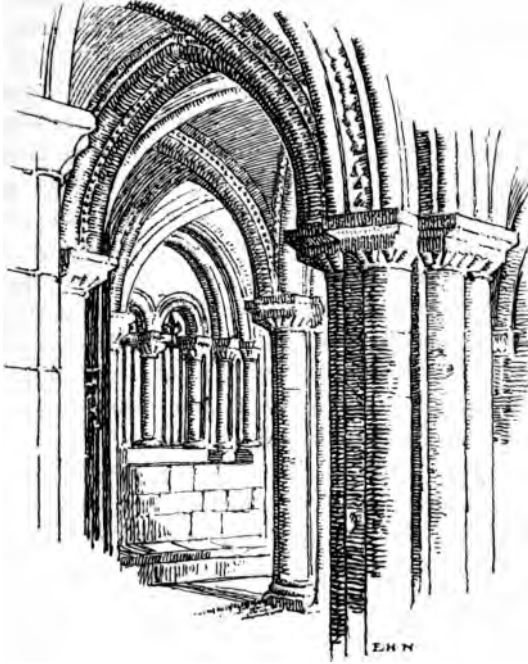
ENTRANCE TO ABBOT'S HOUSE

THE Bishopric of Bristol is of comparatively recent origin, as it is one of the six episcopal foundations of Henry VIII., but its cathedral church has already existed, as the church of a convent of Augustinian Canons, for about four centuries, when it was raised to the dignity of a bishop's seat. Up to

that time, Bristol had been the most remote town in the unwieldy West Mercian see of Worcester. The founder of the abbey was Robert Fitzharding, whom we have already met with as the richest and most powerful citizen of Bristol in the reign of Stephen ; a useful and valued friend of Henry II., and

**Bristol** founder of the House of Berkeley. He was son, or grandson, of that Harding who was reeve of Bristol in the time of William I., and a descendant of a noble Anglo-Saxon family; but it is not necessary to believe in the descent from the Danish kings assigned to him in later years by grateful ecclesiastics. Fitzharding was the possessor of the manor of Billeswick, just outside the city, but separated from it by the river Frome; and here, in 1142, he began to build his monastery. The site was a pleasant one, on the summit and southern slope of a knoll of no great height, but well raised above the marshes by which it was surrounded, whose former existence is called to mind by the names of Canon's Marsh and Frogmore (Frog-marsh) Street. The situation was particularly suitable for clergy of this order who preferred to have their houses outside, but within easy reach, of a large town.

The foundation was at first a very small one—for six canons only; and the church, the first portion finished, was in every respect a smaller, plainer, and more lowly edifice than that we see now. Like the present church, it was built in the form of a cross, with a central tower, and the transept or cross aisle retains much of the original work, especially at its south end. But the nave, or body of the church, was shorter, narrower, and lower; and in the place of the fine and spacious choir we now see there was a short, narrow chancel without aisles, whose foundations still exist beneath the floor. The church was finished in 1148 and consecrated by the Bishop



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of Worcester, assisted by his brethren of Exeter, Llandaff, and St. Asaph. The church finished, the founder next turned his attention to the provision of a permanent place of residence—a close or college—for the canons, and this was placed, as usual, around a cloister to the south of the church. By this time, Fitzharding's growing wealth and dignity had led

Bristol him to increase the scope of the foundation, and these further buildings were erected on a scale of magnificence out of all proportion to that of the church. Much of the work of this second period remains, including the chapter-house with its charming vestibule, the small gateway in Lower College Green, and the lower part of the very fine gate-tower in College Green, which formed the main entrance to the close. The main buildings were complete when Fitzharding died at the age of seventy-five in 1170, and was buried in the church, at the entrance to the choir. It is noteworthy that the abbey was erected not only in the lifetime of its founder, but also in that of its first prior, John, who reigned from the foundation to 1186.

Before the death of this abbot, according to one account, though another places the event half a century later, the Priory was promoted to the rank of an Abbey, a very unusual dignity for a house of Augustinian Canons, for the abbey of Carlisle, Leicester, and Oseney were the only other important examples. The honour was due chiefly to the influence of the Berkeley family; partly, perhaps, to the growing importance of the town of Bristol.

The connection between the religious house at Bristol and the noble family at Berkeley did not cease with the death of the founder, but the prosperity of the one was intimately bound up with the fortunes of the other throughout its whole history. During the life of the second lord, Maurice, who survived his father nineteen years, little or nothing

was done in the way of building, but early in the thirteenth century, under the guidance of the fourth or fifth abbot, William of Bradeston, and doubtless with the aid of the third and fourth lords of Berkeley, Robert II., and his brother Thomas, it seems to have been thought needful to do something to make the church more worthy the importance of the abbey, and the beautiful building we now know as the Elder Lady-chapel was the result. Bradeston showed his interest in the affairs of the neighbouring town by granting the burgesses a strip of the abbey land for the improvement of their harbour; and it was he who first built the small parish church of St. Augustine the Less to provide for the religious needs of the population which had grown up round the abbey. The Lord Thomas just mentioned is the first of his family of whom any memorial exists in the cathedral, though his predecessors were buried there; he died in 1243.

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After Bradeston's death, a period of mismanagement and corruption set in; the canons neglected their religious duties for hunting and other sport, and their Abbot John de Marina was too weak a man to guide and influence them. Barrett quotes from the registry of Bishop Godfrey Gifford that on a visitation (1278) he found the abbey 'as well in temporal as spiritual matters greatly decayed (*damnabiliter prolapsam*),' and ordered 'that in future they do not as bees fly out of the choir as soon as service is ended; but devoutly wait, as becomes holy and settled persons, not as vagrants or vagabonds.'



Bristol    As the abbot was not sufficiently instructed to propound the Word of God in common, he appointed others in his stead. He forbade, under a curse, that any feign himself sick when he is not so; to live a dissolute life and fraudulently despise God's worship; and ordered that in their meals all were to abstain from detraction and obscene speech, and he removed several officers and appointed others more faithful in their place. This rebuke and correction seems to have been successful for the time, but similar irregularities were recorded at several later visitations.

The next important building era was at the beginning of the fourteenth century. From 1306 to 1332 Edmund Knowles was abbot, and whether he was his own architect, or no, it was he who made Bristol Cathedral what we now see it, and made it unique among the great churches of this country. The Augustinian Canons were bound to perform parochial duties, and so every abbey, or priory church, of this order came to belong, in part at least, to the parishioners. This seems to have become very irksome to the canons, and one way of lessening the real or imagined discomfort was to build large choirs for themselves, for the performance of the canonical offices, and to make over the nave to the parishioners; this had been recently done at Carlisle, the one Augustinian Cathedral, and this the clergy determined to do here. To carry out their resolve Abbot Knowles removed all the building east of the centre tower, and replaced it with the present choir and Lady-chapel with their lofty aisles, which cover

an area some six or seven times as large as the original choir. The increased width of the new building caused it to abut against the Elder Lady-chapel which was preserved; but the south windows of the latter were closed, and arches were pierced through its wall to communicate with the choir aisle.

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A recent writer has well said that 'it seems as if Knowles, foretelling the rise of the busy city around the abbey, and its consequent smoke-laden atmosphere, designed his choir specially for light.' Certainly the great size of his windows, and especially their height, suggest this. In the rebuilding Knowles provided for the sepulture of the members of the founder's family, and of the abbots, by constructing those peculiar arched recesses in the walls of the form now known as the Berkeley arch, which occurs later in the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, at Berkeley Church, and appropriately nowhere else save at Berkeley Castle itself, where plainer examples are to be seen in the hall which was rising at the same time as the abbey choir, and no doubt under the influence of the same architect.

In the year 1327 Edward II. was murdered at Berkeley Castle, without, it is fair to say, any complicity on the part of the then Lord Berkeley who had succeeded to the estates and title only the year before. Edward's body was offered to the abbot and canons of Bristol for burial, but they refused to accept it: through fear it is generally thought, but it is more charitable to believe that it was out of loyalty to the memory of their former patron,

**Bristol** who had been imprisoned several years by Edward. The monks of Gloucester gave the murdered king a tomb at which miracles were soon wrought, and with the golden stream of offerings which flowed in they greatly enlarged and embellished their conventual church. It is idle to speculate on what might have been done if the Bristol treasury instead of that at Gloucester had benefited.

Abbot Knowles died in 1332 and was buried before the Rood Altar, that is under the central tower, where no effigy or other monument commemorates him, the church itself being his best memorial. At the time of his death the work of rebuilding the choir was not quite finished, a little being left to complete at the south-west angle: this was done by his successor, Abbot Snow, who also built the chapel now known as the Newton Chapel. Snow was the only abbot of Bristol who sat in Parliament. After the death of Snow there was another pause in the work of building, till the time of Walter Newbery, the seventeenth abbot. The earlier years of Newbery's rule seem to have been very troubled; a rival, Sutton, not only contriving to oust him from his position but to hold it himself for five years, during which the affairs of the abbey again fell into such disorder that the canons expelled him and brought back their old abbot. Newbery, who was first elected abbot in 1428, lived to an advanced age and died in 1473, having been a great benefactor and builder. The chief part of the fabric we owe to him is the noble

centre tower, certainly the most dignified and impressive feature of the cathedral. Although it had no doubt been the intention of Knowles to rebuild the nave to match his choir more suitably, Newbery was the first to make any attempt to carry out the idea, and although he had not at the time of his death actually commenced to build he had provided the materials. The work was begun by the last of the great building abbots, Newland.

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John Newland, or, as he preferred to call himself, Nailheart, with a view to provide himself with a punning rebus, succeeded in 1481, and dying in 1515 was buried in the Lady-chapel in company with his predecessors Newbery and Hunt. He began his building operations by placing the stone vault which still remains upon the transept, and added the upper part of the gate-tower, and he then proceeded to rebuild the nave. He began by laying foundations on the north side, and at the west end, outside the limits of the Norman nave, which was still standing, and on these built as high as the cills of the windows, when the work was stopped on account of want of funds. It is significant that just at this time the Berkeleys were not only involved in a lawsuit, which concerned their title to the estates, but were not in possession of their castle; whether or not this accounts for the failure in supplies, operations suddenly ceased, and were not resumed for nearly four hundred years. Abbot Newland compiled the document known as the Chronicle Roll of the Berkeleys, which is not only

## Bristol



THE NORMAN GATEWAY

a history of that family but a chronicle of the abbots of St. Augustine's; from it most of the information we have concerning the early history of the house is derived.

The cloisters were completed, and the refectory

rebuilt, soon after Newland's death, and Abbot Elliot provided the stalls, while Burton completed the reredos; but the next important change was one of destruction. It is curious that the actual date of the removal of the Norman nave is not known; whether it took place in the early years of the sixteenth century, with a view to rebuilding, or a few years later at the time of the fall of the monasteries, or whether, as some think, a century later still, during the progress of the Civil War. In any case, however, the convent had no time to finish the work of rebuilding, for in 1539 the great monasteries were dissolved, and among them Bristol. At the time of the suppression the revenue of the abbey was £769, worth perhaps ten times as much in our money. The last abbot was Morgan Williams who, with the prior and sixteen canons, retired on pension.

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When Henry VIII. resolved on the destruction of the monasteries he had no doubt a genuine intention of filling their place by, and transferring their endowments largely to, a number of new cathedrals, and had prepared a large and liberal scheme to this effect, which included a see of wealth and importance at Bristol. However, his own necessities and his friends' importunities proved too much for him, and the scheme dwindled to the creation of half a dozen ill-endowed bishoprics, one of which, that at Westminster, lived only a few years. The see of Bristol was one that was retained, but with an establishment shorn of its fair proportions, the

**Bristol** poorest of the English cathedrals. Meanwhile the abbey church was kept in hand, neither sold to the parishioners nor quarried for building, so that in 1542 it was ready to receive its bishop and chapter, the latter consisting of a dean and seven canons. Its dedication was then changed to the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

As originally constituted, the see consisted of all the county of Bristol, whether in Somerset or Gloucester—that is to say, whether in the diocese of Bath and Wells or of Worcester, together with a few neighbouring parishes in Gloucestershire and the whole of the county of Dorset, which was taken from Salisbury. The boundaries of the diocese have since undergone several changes: in 1836 Dorset was exchanged for the northern deaneries of Wiltshire, Malmesbury and Cricklade; and Bedminster, which included most of Bristol south of the Avon, was restored to Bath and Wells, and at the same time the two sees of Bristol and Gloucester were united. A few years afterwards Bedminster was again added to the united diocese, and in 1897 Bristol was separated from Gloucester and again received a bishop of its own, whose territory includes the modern county of the city of Bristol, whether in Gloucestershire or Somerset; the southern parishes of Gloucestershire, and the whole of northern Wiltshire, in which are the historic abbey of Malmesbury and the modern town of Swindon.

Of the bishops who have governed the see little need be said here; the bishopric was very poorly

endowed, and almost all its incumbents looked on it simply as a stepping-stone to higher or better things, some even stipulating for the next promotion on accepting it. Between its foundation in 1542 and its union with Gloucester in 1836 it was ruled by no fewer than forty-three bishops, most of whom held other preferment, and visited their cathedral city as little as with decency they might; Bishop Thornborough, for example, held at the same time the bishoprics of Bristol and Limerick and the deanery of York.

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The first bishop was Paul Bush, the master of the college at Edington, who was distinguished for his knowledge both of theology and medicine; as a married priest, he was removed from his charge in the reign of Mary, but not otherwise persecuted. He died at Winterbourne, where he was buried, but a cenotaph in his cathedral commemorates him. His successor, John Holyman, is said by Fuller to have lived peaceably, not embruuing his hands in Protestant blood.

Richard Fletcher (1589-1593) held the see only a short time before his translation to Worcester on the way to London. His distinguished presence commended him to Queen Elizabeth, and he is famous as the father of Fletcher the dramatist, infamous for his persecution of Mary, Queen of Scots, during the last moments of her life. John Lake was consecrated in 1684, and translated to Chichester in the following year; he was one of the seven bishops imprisoned by James II., and a Nonjuror. His successor, Jonathan



**Bristol** Trelawney, the hero of Hawker's song, was also one of the seven bishops. The well-known name of Secker (1735-1737) belongs rather to the history of Canterbury than to that of Bristol.

The name of Joseph Butler is not only by far the most distinguished in the long list of Bishops of Bristol, but one of the most honoured in the English Church. His epitaph, by Robert Southey, in the cathedral, records of him that 'others had established the historical and prophetic grounds of the Christian religion and the sure testimony of its truth in its perfect adaptation to the hearts of man. It was reserved for him to develop its analogy to the constitution and course of nature; and laying his strong foundation in the depth of that great argument, there to construct another and irrefragable proof; thus rendering philosophy subservient to faith, and finding in outward and visible things the type and evidence of those within the veil.' Butler had already published the *Analogy* when he received the bishopric of Bristol, which he held at first with the rich living of Stanhope in Durham, and afterwards with the deanery of St. Paul's. He lived chiefly at Bristol, where he maintained a princely hospitality, and he is said to have expended the whole of his episcopal revenue on the improvement of his palace. He refused the archbishopric of Canterbury, but two years before his death was translated to Durham; he was, however, buried in his old cathedral.

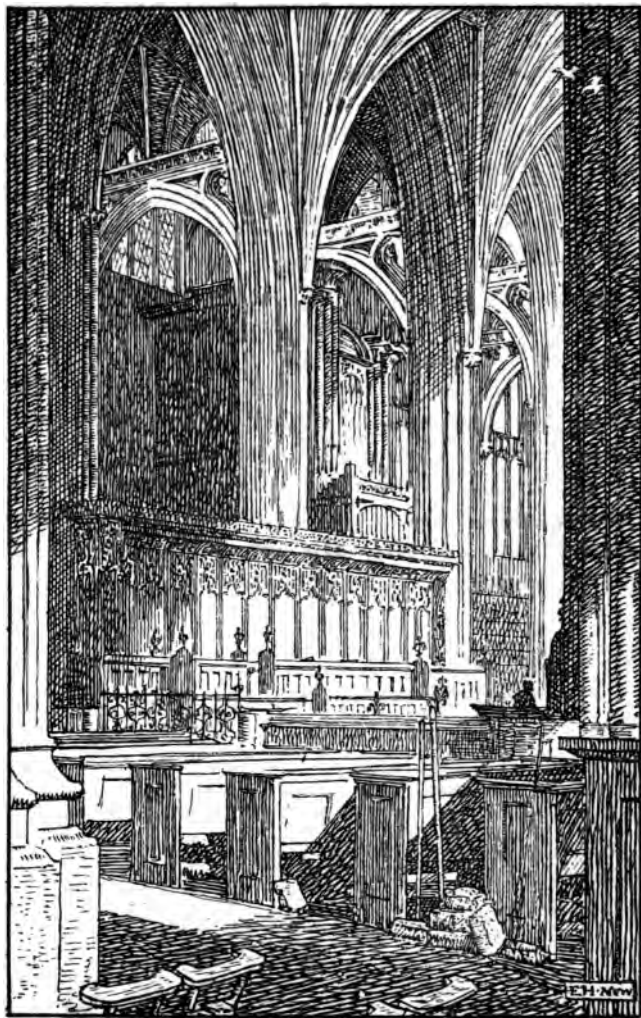
Thomas Newton, consecrated 1761, is favourably known as the editor of the best edition of Milton;

while the episcopate of Robert Gray was rendered memorable by the destruction of the palace at the hands of the mob, during the Reform riots in 1831. After the translation of his successor, Allen, to Ely, in 1836, Bristol for a time was left with half a cathedral, and less than half a bishop, and it was reserved for our own day to complete the establishment and its house by the building of a new and suitable nave to the church from the design of Street, and the appointment of Dr. Forrest Browne to the reconstituted bishopric. Two names among the lesser dignitaries of the foundation deserve mention. Richard Hakluyt, author of the great collection of *The Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, and other works on cosmography, was installed as canon in 1586; and the wise and witty reformer, Sydney Smith, held a canonry here from 1828 until his preferment to St. Paul's. His connection with Bristol does not appear to have been intimate.

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MISERERE IN CATHEDRAL CHOIR



CATHEDRAL CHOIR

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CATHEDRAL



CATHEDRAL FROM WEST

THE Cathedral of Bristol has until recently been the Cinderella, the despised sister, among the English Episcopal churches. Originally small, and shorn even more thoroughly than Oxford or Carlisle of its nave; with its ritual arrangements altered to suit its curtailed dimensions, and its furniture huddled together in an

unseemly manner around the altar at the very east end of the building; and outshone by the more showy attractions of its celebrated neighbour, the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, it has scarcely ever received the attention it merits. In comparing it with the other cathedral churches of this country, however, it is just to remember that not only was it not built for a

Bristol cathedral, but it was not an abbey church of the great Benedictine order, like Peterborough and Gloucester, which became cathedral churches at the same time; and even of the convents of the less wealthy order of St. Augustine, to which it belonged, it was not among the largest. Notwithstanding it is still of very great interest, not only for its own beauties, which are not few, but also for being, in this country at least, a unique experiment in building, and for retaining more of its monastic buildings and surroundings than perhaps any other Augustinian monastery in England.

The cathedral is well placed on high ground on the south side of the grassy, tree-surrounded College Green, the most beautiful of those open spaces which form a conspicuous feature of Bristol. From College Green the whole north side of the church is visible, and its great peculiarity is at once apparent—that, unlike all other great Gothic churches in England, it possesses no clerestory. From this point, too, there is apparent its one great fault, a fatal want of height; and the exterior in no way prepares the visitor for the charm of the interior. The most striking view of the building is obtained as it is approached from the east, where the lack of height is not so much felt, and all the lines lead up naturally to the massive central tower, which sits easily and well, and suitably completes a well-balanced composition. A more interesting view is that depicted in Mr. New's drawing from the south,<sup>1</sup> from the site of some recently destroyed

<sup>1</sup> See p. 118.

houses in Lower College Green, where an excellent picture of the work-day side of a mediæval monastery is to be obtained. Here the whole length of the cathedral is seen, and nestling under its shelter the conventual buildings, the chapter-house, refectory, ruins of the abbot's lodgings, afterwards the bishop's palace, and some old houses which have taken the place of other parts of the convent. On approaching the cathedral by the usual route from the city, Knowles's great choir first comes into view, with its exceptionally lofty transomed windows, and buttresses of enormous mass and great projection; then Abbot Bradeston's Lady-chapel is seen, and then the north transept, containing the masonry, though not the detail, of Fitzharding's original church. We next come to the modern nave, by Street, and lastly to the twin towered west front completed by Pearson in 1888, the last addition to the building; this is low and not particularly satisfactory, but it still remains for its great cavernous porch to be enriched by sculpture.

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On entering by the north porch, here as at most monastic churches the usual public entrance, we find ourselves in the fine nave built in 1877 to match and complete the old choir; it was until the erection of Truro Cathedral the most important piece of modern Gothic church architecture in England, and it is only necessary to say of it that it is a very successful attempt to produce a building which agrees with the earlier work without deceiving the spectator into the belief that it is ancient. Passing eastward up the

Bristol

nave, we reach the transepts which contain the earliest work remaining in the church; in that to the north there is a graceful Early English arch opening into the Elder Lady-chapel. The south transept is of more interest; high up in its east wall there is a small round-headed window, which is the only remaining feature of the original building of Robert Fitzharding, and under the arch below it is the monument of Bishop Butler, with the inscription by Southey, which has already been quoted. On the right hand is a door leading by a staircase to a small gallery which communicated with the canons' dormitory, so that the fathers might reach the church for the nocturnal offices without going out of doors. Similar galleries on a larger scale may be seen at Oxford and Westminster. The vaulted roofs of both transepts are later—the north having been built by Newland, and the south by Elliot; the sculptured bosses are worthy of attention. In the south wing there is a portrait-bust of the eminent painter Müller, a native of Bristol, and in the north are memorials to Mary Carpenter, philanthropist; to Catherine Winkworth, the translator of *Lyra Germanica*; to F. J. Fargus, better known as a writer by his pseudonym of 'Hugh Conway'; and to Emma Marshall, who wrote many excellent books for girls. Under the crossing were buried Robert Fitzharding, the founder, and Edmund Knowles, the builder of the choir, but no memorials mark their resting-place.

From the transept admission is gained to the choir, Abbot Knowles's great work, and until recently

the main body of the building. The beholder's attention is struck at once by its air of spaciousness and apparent breadth, as well as by the size and beauty of its windows, especially that which fills in the east end ; but it is struck too by its marked want of height. The building we are in measures 54 feet from the floor to the ridge of its stone roof, a foot or two higher than the nave of Lichfield, a foot or two less than those of Worcester and Wells ; but the effect derived is that it is not much more than half as high as any of the three. Still this defect is inherent in Knowles's method, and though we would not perhaps wish the experiment repeated, we cannot be sorry that it was made. If he had carried the work up another 20 feet the effect of his centre aisle would have been sublime, but the narrower side-aisles would have been disproportionably lofty : it may be, too, that he was timid, and exercised a wise discretion in keeping well within his powers.

The peculiarity of Knowles's work lies in this, that he boldly carried his main arches to the full height of the building, and raised the side-aisles to the same level, thus abolishing the stages of triforium and clerestory, and obtaining all his light by huge windows in the aisles, whose great length was broken by traceried transoms at mid-height, which remove the appearance of weakness produced by long unbroken mullions. The vaulting of the side-aisles forms a curious and interesting feature. There is an Indian proverb that an arch never sleeps, by which is implied that its own weight and any that it supports are

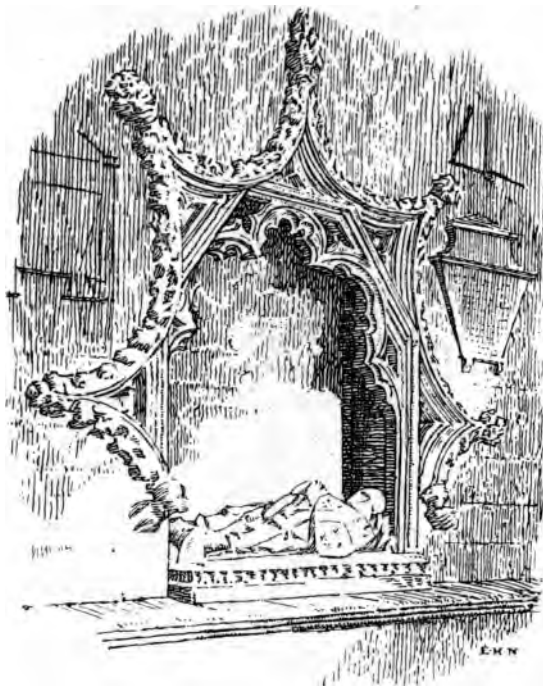


**Bristol** always tending to thrust it outwards, and if the pressure were not counteracted the building would sooner or later fall. In this choir the thrust of the great vault is collected at a point a little above the capitals of the pillars, and opposite this point a stone beam is carried across the interior of the aisle, strengthened and braced by an arch below it; this beam transmits the thrust to the immensely massive buttresses outside, which counteract it with ease. The beams also carry the vaults of the bays or divisions of the aisles, which are placed transversely to that of the main building so that their slighter thrust is not added to that of the central roof; the arches below them have the additional advantage that they bring down the apparent height of the aisles which would otherwise appear excessive, and the expedient is as picturesque as it is clever. What suggested this singular design to Knowles is not known; several churches on the same plan, the so-called 'Hall Churches,' were rising in Germany at about the same time, but none of them are earlier in date than the Bristol example, though the grim Romanesque nave of Lubeck Cathedral had been built on somewhat similar lines two centuries before; it seems reasonable to believe that he, or his architect, evolved it for himself, and certainly the construction of the aisle-vaulting was original, and was never repeated in this or any country.

When the building became a cathedral a screen was built across the church two bays east of the tower, converting a portion of the choir into a small

nave or ante-chapel; the stalls were moved eastward, and the altar placed at the extreme east end of the church. Since the new nave has been built the old arrangement has been reverted to: the stalls have been replaced under the two western arches on either hand; the altar brought forward to the fourth bay, leaving behind it a processional path and a Lady-chapel, and the Tudor screen has been removed; portions of the latter are to be seen built up into the backs of the sedilia. The actual choir occupies the four western bays of Knowles's building; the lofty reredos which closes it in at the east is modern work, a memorial to the long connection of Bishop Ellicot with the see; it has much beauty of detail, but is cold in colour, and interferes with the view of the east window. The very costly and unsuitable pavement and the sedilia, five on each side, are also recent gifts. The canopied stalls, the gift of Abbot Elliot (1515) deserve notice, though the substitution of plate-glass for their panelled backs has very much lessened their effectiveness. The misereres, thirty in number, are of much interest, and will repay a more careful examination. Several of them illustrate the *History of Reynard the Fox*, and almost all are secular and more or less humorous. The character of the carving, which is more than usually full of detail, may be seen in the example depicted by Mr. New, representing the favourite subject of the Fox, in a friar's gown, preaching to the Geese from the text, 'God is my record how greatly I long for you all in the bowels.' The series has been described and illus-

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Cathedral



BERKELEY ARCH AND EFFIGY

trated by Mr. Hall Warren in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xviii., and in the *Proceedings of the Clifton Antiquarian Club*, vol. i. Passing into the south aisle features of interest crowd upon the spectator. The singular vaulting and the great windows first attract attention, and then the range of Berkeley arches beneath the latter; their carving deserves

minute examination. Under the first is the recumbent effigy of Lord Thomas (1243), and beneath the second is that of Maurice II., while the last to the east covers a tomb without effigies to another Thomas and his wife. From the first bay opens the Newton Chapel, a lofty building crowded with the cumbrous Jacobean monuments of the family from which it takes its name; and from the fourth a doorway of great beauty and delicacy of carving leads to the sacristy. In this little apartment the skeleton vaulting should be noticed, and the sculpture on its south side, so realistic that the artist has represented a snail crawling across a leaf. The ecclesiologist will observe two rare features here—a stove for baking the altar bread, and a tall narrow cupboard for the reception of the abbot's staff. At the east end is another doorway which is curiously adorned with representations of the Ammonite fossil, employed as crockets. This doorway is built with stone from Keynsham, and St. Keyne like St. Hilda has the local reputation of having turned the snakes of the neighbourhood into these fossils, a belief which probably suggested the use of this ornament.

The little sacristy proved too small for its object, and the large and well-lighted Berkeley Chapel, to which it gives access, was also used as a vestry; traces of its dual purpose may be seen in the two recesses for altars, with their piscinas, beneath the east windows, and in the cupboards recessed in the walls. A small door leads to the sacristan's apart-

Bristol      ment above. This chapel is now used as a song-school.

Returning to the aisle, a doorway, part of the Tudor choir screen, beneath the easternmost arch leads to the retro-choir behind the reredos. This is of the same height and general character as the choir, but the side aisles are not continued to the end. It has three bays, one of which forms a processional path, and the other two the Lady-chapel. Every feature in this part of the church repays careful attention. First, let us notice the great window which entirely fills in the upper part of the east end ; its tracery is both singular and beautiful, and much of its glass is original and contemporary : Mr. Winston places its date at about the year 1320. The lower portion of the window represents a stem of Jesse ; the figures are contained in medallions formed by the ramifications of a vine branch ; nearly all are modern, but most of the very graceful scroll work is ancient. In the three lights above are represented the crucified Saviour with the Blessed Virgin and St. John, while the head tracery contains an unusually rich display of heraldry. This window should be compared with the more complete contemporary examples at Shrewsbury and Selby. The four side-windows of the Lady-chapel also contain glass of the same date, though of a different character ; they are examples of the school to which the better-known fourteenth-century glass at Tewkesbury and Wells belongs. The three upper lights of the first window on the south side are filled by a spirited if quaint representation of the martyr-

dom of St. Edmund, the name-saint of the builder. Below the east window is a reredos composed of three deep arched recesses adorned with richly gilded diaper work: this was the work of Knowles, but the graceful cresting which finishes it was added by Abbot Burton about two hundred years later. In the Lady-chapel may be seen the effigies of three of the abbots, placed in arched recesses, resembling those already met with; they are all in good preservation, and are excellent illustrations of the eucharistic vestments of a mitred abbot of the fifteenth century. It is worthy of note that each carries his pastoral staff in a different position, so that the prevalent idea that an abbot always bore it with the crook turned inwards to signify that his jurisdiction was internal cannot be considered as universally accepted. The three abbots buried here are Newbury (1463) nearest to the altar, and Hunt (1491) on the north side, and Newland (1515) on the south. The rebus of the latter, a bleeding heart pierced by nails, may be noticed not only on the tomb itself, but elsewhere in the church. The other space in the Lady-chapel is filled by the graceful fourfold sedilia—modern work, but said to be a reproduction of an ancient set. In this part of the cathedral one piece of ancient furniture is preserved; this is a desk, solidly constructed and mounted on wheels, whose purpose was to move the heavy service-books from side to side of the choir.

The  
Cathedral

Under the arch opening into the north aisle is

**Bristol** a monument to the memory of the first bishop, Paul Bush, who however was not buried here. The tomb, which was probably erected by himself while he held the bishopric, is an example of the curious class of 'cadaver' monuments, which are perhaps more common in the west of England than elsewhere. These monuments were erected during the lifetime of the persons they were intended to commemorate, and they carried each a gruesome representation of a decomposed corpse, to remind their owners that they too were mortal. The intention was that after death the unsightly object should be removed altogether, or placed in an obscure position below, and that its place should be taken by a portrait effigy of the deceased fully vested. It not infrequently happened, however, that he was buried elsewhere, or that his successors did not trouble to complete the monument, and then the corpse-effigy or cadaver was allowed to remain, as here, in the place of honour. The north choir aisle generally resembles that on the south, but owing to the position of the Elder Lady-chapel its western windows are small and high up. One of them is filled with glass of the fifteenth century. At the east end of the aisle may be seen the mutilated remains of an elaborate reredos, which was destroyed to make place for the cumbrous Jacobean monument to Sir R. Codrington (*ob.* 1618). The window above and its companion in the south aisle are interesting examples of the enamel glass of the seventeenth century. They are popularly attributed to the

benefaction of Nell Gwynne, but were more probably the gift of Dean Henry Glenham, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, whose arms appear in each. The subjects depicted in the north window, arranged as type and ante-type, are the Resurrection and Jonah and the Whale; the Ascension and the Ascent of Elijah to Heaven; the Agony in the Garden and the Sacrifice of Isaac. In the south are seen Christ Purging the Temple, Jacob's Dream, Paying the Tribute, and the Sacrifice of Gideon. It may be said here of the large amount of modern glass in the cathedral that, if none of it is specially noteworthy, none is absolutely bad. The organ, a fine instrument by Father Smith with later additions, is now placed in this aisle. Its handsome case of eighteenth-century woodwork, originally meant to surmount an organ-screen, is not seen to advantage in the comparatively narrow aisle. The familiar tradition that the instrument was used by Handel is current here, as at many other places which possess organs which were in existence at the time of the great composer. At the east end of the aisle there is a bust of Southey, and at the west end a mural tablet should be looked for to the memory of the wife of the poet Mason, Gray's friend and correspondent, with an inscription from the pen of the poet. Under an arch opening into the Elder Lady-chapel there is a high altar-tomb with two recumbent effigies. An inscription on the jamb of the arch attributes the tomb to Robert Fitzharding, founder of the abbey and of the Berkeley family; but another

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ELDER LADY CHAPEL

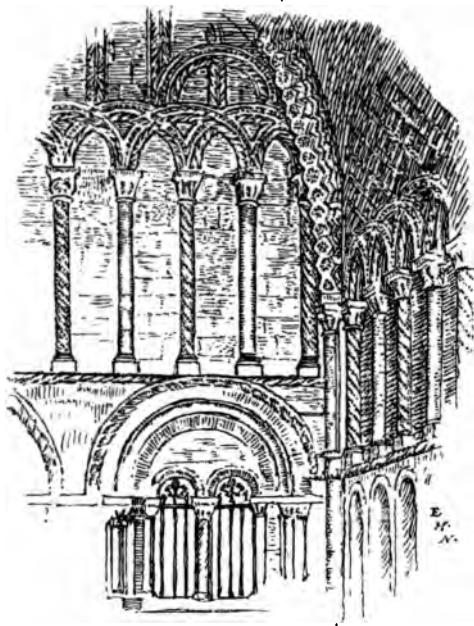
inscription, on the tomb itself, assigns the effigies to Maurice, ninth Baron Berkeley, who died in 1368, and to the Lady Margaret, his mother, daughter to Roger Mortimer, Earl of March; neither inscription is ancient, but the latter is doubtless correct.

From the north aisle of the choir is the usual

entrance to the Elder Lady-chapel, so called since the altar of Our Lady was transferred to the east end of the church. This chapel is of the Early English period, and is a very beautiful and elegant example of the work of that time. The workmanship of its windows—lancets arranged in triplets with detached shafts—should be noticed, and special attention should be given to the carving of foliage and grotesques in the spandrils of the graceful arcading: in one an ape playing the Pan-pipes is accompanied by a ram on an instrument resembling the violin; in another a goat is represented as returning from hunting with a hare slung across his back, blowing a horn; while a third has a fox running away with a goose. These and other animals are very spiritedly carved.

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Having completed the circuit of the church there yet remain to be visited the cloister and the remains of the conventual buildings around it, which though much mutilated deserve careful examination. The cloister, which is approached from the south transept, is small in area and late in date, though it occupies the exact site of the original Norman one. Only two of its four alleys remain, those on the east and north, and the latter is contracted by the increased width of the modern nave. They contain numerous memorials, many to people of importance in their day, most of which have been removed here from the interior of the cathedral. They include monuments to Mrs. Draper, Sterne's Eliza, and to Cowper's Lady Hesketh; to Bird the



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artist, and to the Reverend John Eagles, 'Scholar, Painter, and Poet,' and a tablet to several members of the Porter family, nearly all of whom wrote much and one of whom, Jane, is still remembered for her *Scottish Chiefs*. Upon the east walk of the cloister the deeply recessed vestibule or portico of the chapter-house opens;<sup>1</sup> this is a picturesque piece of late Norman work, part of Fitzharding's build-

<sup>1</sup> Vignette, p. 121.

ing: an early instance of the employment of the pointed arch may be seen in its vaulted roof. From the vestibule entrance is gained to the chapter-house, the glory of the cathedral, and one of the most ornate pieces of Anglo-Norman building existing. The present east end is modern, the room having been formerly longer, and perhaps apsidal, but it is otherwise unaltered. The elaborate ornament with which the walls are completely encrusted never quite repeats itself. The great stone vault, which is also much enriched, was a daring piece of work for its time, if not quite so daring as that of its contemporary neighbour at Gloucester. The range of shallow niches round the chapter-house served as the seats of the canons when they met daily in chapter. Under the chapter-house floor twelve stone coffins were discovered at a restoration in 1831; they were in all probability the coffins of the early abbots. The lid of one of these is preserved in the canons' vestry; it is of Norman date, and is curiously sculptured with a representation of the Descent into Hell: Christ tramples upon Satan and sets free an imprisoned soul. To the south of the chapter-house is another room of the original monastery, once the canons' day-room, now the lay-clerks' vestry. Passing along the east alley, at its south end is seen a door leading to the vestibule of the abbot's house, afterwards the bishop's palace, destroyed by fire during the riot of 1831. It contains the few books of the cathedral library preserved from the fire, and from

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Bristol its windows the blackened ruins of the palace may be seen.

The south and west walks of the cloister are wanting, but on the south side the refectory still remains. It is a very late building, and like many other late refectories, is raised on a basement story. It contains the doorway of an earlier building, a pleasing example of thirteenth-century art. Here Lower College Green, the great west court of the monastery, is reached. In it formerly stood a chapel where tradition says that St. Jordan, one of the companions of St. Augustine, was buried. On turning to the left, a little Norman gateway will be noticed which was the original entrance to the abbot's house.<sup>1</sup> Around this court many of the buildings connected with the convent were placed, including the king's tower, provided for the accommodation of royal guests; these buildings have now nearly all disappeared. At the highest point of the green, near the west front of the cathedral, is situated the great Norman gate-tower, the principal entrance to the close, a particularly fine example of enriched late Norman work; its carving is so fresh that it has been suggested that it is not an original work, but a reconstruction of Tudor or Elizabethan date. There seems no reason, however, to believe that it is not of the date of the founder. The upper portion of the tower was rebuilt at the beginning of the sixteenth century by Abbot Elliot, whose statue, with that

<sup>1</sup> Initial to Chapter VI.

of Abbot Newland, adorns the south front, those of King Henry II. and Robert Fitzharding occupying similar positions on the north. Passing through the gateway the cathedral precincts are left, and the visitor finds himself again in College Green.

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CARVING IN ELDER LADY CHAPEL



THE LORD MAYOR'S CHAPEL

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LESSER MONASTIC AND COLLEGIATE FOUNDATIONS



THE proverb, 'As sure as God is in Gloucestershire,' no doubt owed its origin to the great group of abbeys in the north of the county, the three mitred abbeys of Gloucester, Tewkesbury, and Winchcombe, and the important Cistercian house of Hailes; but Bristol, the city of churches, certainly

deserved a share in the credit from the number of its conventual and other religious foundations. These religious houses, with their gardens and orchards, formed a practically continuous semicircle around the northern, or Gloucestershire, side of the town, separated from it by the river Frome, whose curved course they followed, occupying the gently rising ground



Bristol about it, and, to some extent, the heights beyond. This amphitheatre of churches, with their conventual buildings, large gardens and orchards, sloping up from the river, and backed by steeply rising wooded hills, cannot but have added immensely to the beauty of the town.

Beginning at the south-west was the great Augustinian abbey, already described, and next, on the same knoll and only separated by College Green, came the Gaunts' Hospital, beyond which was the small house of Carmelites, the gardens of the two joining. Beyond and lower down, but with its grounds stretching high up the hillside, was the important friary of Franciscans in Lewin's Mead; and beyond this again, and standing a little higher up the hill, was the one foundation for Benedictine monks, the priory of St. James, built by the great Earl Robert. On the high ground above the two last there was a small convent of Benedictine nuns on St. Michael's Hill; and lastly, the semicircle was completed by the house of the Black or Dominican Friars, higher up the river, but occupying a low-lying situation beneath the shadow of the castle, at the east end of the town. Besides these there were hospitals which were to some extent religious foundations: the early St. Bartholomew's, near the Franciscan Friary, just outside the north gate, and the more recent, though still mediæval, Foster's Almshouses on St. Michael's Hill, with a pretty Late Gothic chapel bearing the rare dedication to the Three Kings of Cologne; and lastly, beyond the ring and well

removed from the populous town, there was a small hospital, perhaps two, for lepers, near the ford through the Frome, known as Lawford's Gate. On the south side of the Avon, too, there were some three or four religious houses, all small and unimportant, and now quite demolished.

The abbey of St. Augustine has already been described; of the others the earliest in date, and perhaps the most important, was the Benedictine priory of St. James, founded by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, early in the reign of Stephen, or in the closing years of that of Henry 1. It was never an independent house, but was a cell to the abbey of Tewkesbury, of which the earl was a great benefactor, as the son-in-law of its founder. It is said that one-tenth of the Caen stone imported for the building of the castle was devoted to the erection of the priory. Earl Robert endowed his foundation with the manor of Esselega, now Ashley, a northern suburb of Bristol, the tithes of various rents, all churches of his fee in Cornwall, and one church beyond the sea, that of Escrimoville, in Normandy. In addition he gave it the profits of a Whitsuntide fair held in the great open space in front of the priory, and the prior had also the prisage of all wines brought into the port of Bristol during the octave of St. James; the two last benefactions proved to be the source of much subsequent litigation.

The founder, who died October 31, 1147, was buried in the centre of the choir of the church, in a tomb of green jasper, which has entirely disappeared;

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Bristol the tomb in the nave, usually assigned to him, having no claim to that honour.

The last prior, Richard of Cirencester, resigned the house to the king at the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, and received an annual pension of £13, 6s. 8d., which he lived many years to enjoy.

When the priory was founded it was entirely extra-municipal, but the town soon spread in this direction, and in 1374 its church became parochial as well as monastic; to the parishioners being assigned the nave, or rather that portion of it which still forms the parish church. It does not seem that it was then provided with a tower, as it was agreed that the parish should build a bell-tower, the prior finding stone, and earth for mortar, from the monastic estates; that the bells should be provided at the joint expense of the two parties, to be used in common, and that repairs should be at mutual expense.

The buildings of the priory were granted in 1544 to Henry Brayne, and they were still standing in 1579, at which date they are minutely, but not very intelligibly, described in a deed of partition between the grantee's heirs. They afterwards passed, first by lease and later by purchase, into the hands of the mayor and corporation for public purposes.

Little now remains except the nave of the church, or rather that part of it which was parochial, for the one conventual bay perished with the eastern limb. The part which does remain, however, is an excellent and almost unaltered example of a Norman church of moderate size, and it has the rare merit of preserving

its original front. The south side is finely placed above the great open space which was once the site of the fair, now in part a beautiful garden with seats for the aged and weary, in part a useful and pleasant playground for children; it shows the flank of the south aisle, rebuilt in the Gothic of the seventeenth century, with the simple, substantial tower marking the limits of the monastic and parochial portions of the church. The Norman front has to be looked for, as it is hidden away behind the houses which cling to the south aisle of the church; its lower portion is severely plain, its upper part highly enriched though sadly weather-worn, being executed in a soft freestone. The lower stage is pierced by a plain doorway, the upper has an intersecting arcade, adorned with chevron moulding, three of whose arches are pierced for windows. Above, again, is a circular window, well known as a very early example of the use of tracery; it is made up of nine circles, one central and eight placed around it, round which a cable moulding twines in and out. Internally the church has an air of space and airiness, due to the unusual width of the nave, which is separated from the aisles by arcades of five Norman arches on each side, moulded in two orders—the inner plain, the outer highly enriched. The arches are borne by light circular piers which have semicircular shafts attached to their cardinal faces; the arrangement is varied on the south side by the introduction of two piers of different section. The lower stage is completed by a really striking string-course of lozenge moulding combined with the billet.

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Bristol    There is no triforium, but a lofty clerestory with five plain, deeply splayed windows on each side. The three large and lofty windows at the west end are adorned by jamb-shafts and chevron moulding. The elaborately arcaded east end is modern, and, like most modern Norman work, entirely unsatisfactory. Modern, too, is the additional north aisle, by Sir Gilbert Scott; it has the one merit that it does not attempt to masquerade as part of the original building. One or two monuments call for attention. In an arched recess in the south aisle there is a freestone effigy of a man bareheaded, with long curling hair, clad in a civilian costume consisting of gown, girdle, and cloak. This is erroneously assigned to the founder, but it is evidently a work of the thirteenth century, and is more probably the effigy of Richard Grenville, buried here in 1240. In the outer north aisle there is a good example of an Early Renaissance tomb: a lofty Corinthian canopy covers three kneeling figures, Sir Charles Somerset, son of the Earl of Worcester, with his wife and daughter. The knight is in armour, and the ladies in the costume of the period, 1598. This tomb is soberly and agreeably coloured. The Princess Eleanor, the ill-fated Demoiselle of Bretagne, was buried in this church, but her body was afterwards removed to Amesbury, and no memorial of her remains at either place.

The monastic church has entirely disappeared. It seems not to have been cruciform, but, according to William Worcester, who records its dimensions, it consisted of a choir of about 66 feet in length

(Prioratus), and a Lady-chapel of the same length. The conventual buildings have disappeared almost as completely as the church; they do not seem to have followed the typical monastic plan, but to have been grouped around the eastern limb of the church, chiefly on the north, but partly also on the south side. Barrett says that in 1753 a part of the ruins of the priory was still to be seen—'a square room with niches in the walls round it, in length 24 yards, and of breadth in the clear 8 yards, possibly the refectory for the monks. It appears to have been vaulted with freestone, of which the side walls were built very strong.' It was converted in his day into two houses. This is probably the fragment now remaining built into the houses to the east of the church tower: two lofty buttresses to the south, and two at its east end call attention to its mediæval character. This is the only portion of the monastery remaining, but on the north side of the parish church, at its west end, there is an old clergy-house, of Elizabethan date, which has good plaster-work in its ceilings.

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Next in point of date was the small nunnery or hospital founded about 1170 by Eva, widow of Robert Fitzharding, for nuns of the Benedictine Order. It stood to the west of St. James's and higher up the hillside, nearly opposite the east end of St. Michael's Church. It was endowed with the manor of Southmead, and possessed also Iron Acton, Bishop's Moor, Lawrence Weston, and Codrington—all in the Bristol

bristol neighbourhood. It was peculiar in having its own rector. Its very fine seal is still in existence, but all the buildings have disappeared, and their site is occupied by the King David Hotel. The foundress, dying in 1173, was buried, not in her own convent, for she became the first prioress, but with her husband in his greater abbey.

The abbey of St. Augustine and the nunnery just described were not the only religious foundations Bristol owed to the piety and liberality of the Harding family. Robert Fitzharding left, in addition to his son Maurice—the first Lord Berkeley of his race—a younger son, Robert, who inherited his father's manor of Billeswick-juxta-Bristol. This Robert married firstly, Hawisia, daughter of Robert de Gournay of Barrow, in Somerset; and in second nuptials, Avicia, daughter and heiress of Robert de Gaunt. By his first wife he had one daughter who married a de Gournay, probably her cousin, and left one son, Robert. His second wife bore him two sons, Maurice and Henry, who took their mother's name, and are known as Sir Maurice and Sir Henry Gaunt. The younger brother entering Holy Orders, and the elder dying childless, their nephew, Robert de Gournay, became their heir, in addition to succeeding to the estates of his mother and his grandfather (Gournay). These three men were the founders of the important religious house and charity known as Gaunt's Hospital.

The original foundation by Maurice Gaunt was

rather charitable than religious, being for the maintenance of a chaplain, and for the relief of a hundred poor daily; and was under the control of the prior and canons of St. Augustine's. Maurice died in 1230; it is uncertain whether he was buried in his hospital chapel, or at his other foundation for Black Friars, but his effigy is treasured at the former spot. After his death, Robert de Gournay confirmed the charter of his uncle, and further endowed the hospital with additional lands 'to God and the Blessed Mary and Blessed Mark, and to our monastery of Billeswyke'; he freed it from the control of the abbot of St. Augustine's, and so enlarged the foundation as to provide for a master, three chaplains, and the relief of one hundred poor persons daily. His uncle, Henry Gaunt, became the first master. De Gournay died in 1260, and was buried at St. Mark's, where his effigy lies side by side with that of Sir Maurice Gaunt.

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Henry Gaunt, the first master, was also a considerable benefactor; under his rule the scope of the foundation was changed, and it became more distinctly monastic, or rather collegiate, the staff of the hospital being altered to a master, twelve brothers (clergymen), and five brothers (laymen), and twenty-seven poor persons, out of whom twelve are to be scholars to serve only in the choir, in black capes and surplices. It is usually stated that this was a community of 'Bonshommes,' but this is a mistake; it was composed of secular clergy.

Henry Gaunt died in 1268, at a very advanced age,



**Bristol** and was buried in the chapel, the present building which was probably begun by him. Before his death, but after the separation from St. Augustine's, a dispute arose between the canons of St. Augustine and the brethren of St. Mark as to the right of the latter to bury in College Green before their house; the question was submitted to the bishop, who ordered that the burial should be permitted so long as the ground was always kept level so as not to destroy the amenities of the place.

No further change took place in the constitution of the hospital until the Reformation, but it received many benefactions, more particularly from the Berkeley and Gournay families, and later, at the close of the fifteenth century, from Miles Salley, Bishop of Llandaff, who reconstructed the east end of the chapel. The foundation survived the destruction of the lesser monasteries, but in 1534 the master and brethren executed a deed acknowledging the king's supremacy, and in 1540 by another deed they surrendered the hospital to the king. Its annual revenue was then £112, 9s. 9d., according to Dugdale, or £140, as Speed says. Though the old foundation was destroyed the hospital did not entirely perish; the chapel and most of the buildings attached to it were granted to the mayor and corporation, in consideration of a payment of £1000, and after the lapse of a few years the City School, or Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, was established on its site, chiefly owing to the liberality of two citizens, John Cave and William Birde, both of whom were buried in the chapel. A

little later another portion of the site was utilised for the girl's school, known as the Red Maid's Hospital, endowed by Alderman Whitson.

The corporation had for many years granted the use of the chapel to the French Protestant community for the purpose of religious worship, but in 1720 the mayor and corporation, who had hitherto worshipped in state at the cathedral, having quarrelled with the dean and chapter over some trivial question of precedence, decided to restore and adorn St. Mark's or Gaunt's Chapel for official use, 'it being a chapel belonging to the mayor, burgesses, and commonalty.' This was done, and ever since that date the building has been known as the Mayor's Chapel, and used for civic worship. It is just to add that the city provided other accommodation for the dispossessed strangers.

Queen Elizabeth's Hospital was not the only educational establishment in Bristol which grew up on the ruins of the monastic system; a Grammar School occupied the buildings of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which we shall meet with later. This school not only outstripped its rival at Gaunt's Hospital, but outgrew its accommodation, and in 1766 the two schools were transferred: Queen Elizabeth's boys going to St. Bartholomew's, and the Grammar School boys coming up to Gaunt's, where they remained till late in the nineteenth century, when the present handsome school was built in Tyndall's Park. The educational connection of Gaunt's Hospital did not even then cease, for another great public school, the

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Bristol Merchant Venturers' Technical College, now occupies the old site. The chapel has undergone several restorations, especially a thorough and generally satisfactory one in 1888-89.

The only portion of the old hospital now remaining is the very beautiful chapel, situated almost within the shadow of the cathedral, on the north-east side of the tree-shaded College Green, charmingly placed among a group of pleasing early Georgian houses, which it is to be hoped may long escape the hand of the improver. Externally the only portion visible is the lofty west front of the main chapel, and that of its lower south aisle or south chapel (strictly speaking, the building faces more nearly south than west). There is a graceful doorway with arcading, dating from the recent restoration; the huge window of nine lights above is an early nineteenth-century reproduction of an earlier window whose tracery still exists, adorning a sham ruin on the summit of Brentry Hill, some three or four miles out of Bristol, on its north side. The south aisle has a window which in its tracery and its profusion of ball-flower ornament recalls Abbot Thokey's work at Gloucester. The pretty red sandstone tower, finished in 1487, is hidden from sight except in distant views.

On entering by the west door a descent of several steps leads to the floor of the chapel, and from their summit a good view is obtained of the whole of its body. It makes no pretence to be other than a chapel, but it is a very fine one, long and lofty, measuring



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120 feet in length along its north side (the south is about 5 feet less), by 21 feet 6 inches in width. Its length is broken on the north side by a shallow transept, and on the south there is a series of accretions extending for the whole length. The chapel is not quite so early in date as the first foundation, but cannot be much later. Its architecture indicates that it belongs to the period of the mastership of Henry Gaunt (1280 to 1268), but late in the period, as it was built when the Early English style of architecture began to give way to the

**ristol**     Decorated. It has on the north side of its nave four, and on the south two large and lofty windows, divided into three lights each by massive tracery of the simplest type, and enriched toward the interior by jamb shafts and well moulded rere-arches. Graceful arches open into the transepts, that on the south formed by the lower story of the tower: the naturalistic character of the foliage adorning the capitals of the responds indicates the commencing change of style in the architecture. The sanctuary beyond was remodelled by Bishop Miles Salley about the year 1500, and is a fine example of the more ornate work of the time. High up at the east end there is a large window the full width of the chapel, with narrower windows of similar character on the north and south sides. Below, the reredos at the east end, with the fourfold sedilia on the south side, and the two elaborate monuments to be noticed later, make a continuous band of the most delicate and lace-like enrichment, dissimilar in its parts, but forming a most harmonious whole. In the midst of the panelling and tabernacle-work of the (attached) reredos there is a not unpleasing altar-painting, the work of a local artist, John King, 1829. The group of chapels ranged along the south side next call for attention. First, on the west, is the south aisle or chapel, of the time of Edward II.; this has a range of traceried windows closed by a neighbouring house on its south side, and is almost full of monuments; it communicates with the nave by two plain arches. Beyond, between the last-mentioned and the tower, is

a much lower monumental chapel, too dark in spite of its three large windows. This chapel is very late in date, built about the year 1510. It has fine niches between the windows, and an enriched hagioscope, or perforation through its wall to command a view of the High Altar. Lastly, the Jesus Chapel, called also the Poyntz Chapel from its founder, Sir Robert Poyntz of Iron Acton, fills in the angle between the tower and the sanctuary. This is the latest portion of the building, finished about 1520, and is one of the most beautiful examples of its period. It is roofed with a fan-vault which contains the arms of Henry VIII. with those of Queen Catherine of Aragon, and has a series of beautiful niches round the walls. Its east window contains the only original, though not the only old glazing in the chapel, and its floor is unique in this country, being paved with Moorish tiles (azuleias) from Spain.

The furniture is all modern and, unfortunately for effect, not arranged in the collegiate manner, but the glass and the monuments yet remain to be noticed. The chapel is rich in old glass, chiefly foreign, and though not of the highest merit, yet much of it pleasing. The east window is of late Gothic-Flemish work, with St. Barbara and St. Catherine. The first window in the nave, on the north, is French glass, dated 1548; it contains the monograms of Henry II. of France and Diana of Poitiers. The next window is also of French glass, a little earlier in date; it contains scenes from the Passion, of which the scourging is particularly noticeable, and the whole colouring is

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Bristol satisfactory. The other windows in the chapel proper are modern, and most of them armorial. The south aisle has some good German glass in its west window, and at the other end is a much admired and singularly inartistic chiaro-oscuro representation of Archbishop Becket, brought here from Fonthill, whence much of the old glass came. The Dutch medallion glass in monochrome in the windows of the memorial chapel is also worthy of notice.

But the chief glory of St. Mark's lies in its series of monuments, almost entirely of benefactors to the institution, or of men who had otherwise deserved well of their city—a series extending from the thirteenth century to the present time.

On entering, on the left is seen the carved and canopied Elizabethan tomb of William Birde (*ob.* 1590), mayor, sheriff, and benefactor to the school; and on the right the recumbent effigy of Lord Richard Berkeley, who died in 1604, armed but bare-headed. Above the elaborate epitaph there is a curious admonition, thus translated by Pryce: 'Though all men may desire to know my name and race, yet no man may desire to know my mind. If any should take up the inquiry who I am, reply, I know not; but let me advise that man to know himself.'

At the east end, on the north side of the altar, under an arched recess whose front is richly panelled and crested, is the effigy of Miles Salley in full

eucharistic vestments, with mitre and crozier; and just to the west of the last, and forming part of the same design, is the still richer arched recess which covers the tomb of Sir Thomas Berkeley of Ubley, and his wife. The canopy of this tomb has a double cusped or feathered ogee arch, whose finial pierces the rich cresting. Sir Thomas died A.D. 1361, but the recess is part of the restoration of Bishop Salley. The female effigy is particularly graceful in its simple lines.

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In the south aisle is the interesting thirteenth-century effigy which is attributed to the first master, Henry Gaunt. It represents a man in civilian costume, with cote-hardi, cloak and hood, laced shoes, and his anlace or sheath-knife suspended from his waist. Here, too, is the reputed tomb of Carr, the founder of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, and a kneeling figure of Alderman Thomas James, mayor and Member of Parliament, who died A.D. 1619. In addition there is an interesting seventeenth-century effigy of a boy, John Cookin, and a white marble statue preserves the refined features of a recent benefactor, Alderman Bengough.

In the middle of the monumental chapel, on the same low altar-tomb, are the two recumbent effigies which have always been assigned to the founders. Maurice Gaunt (*ob.* 1230) is represented in hauberk, with sleeves covering arms and hands, and a coif over the head, all in one piece. Separate chausses protect the legs, the whole being of linked mail. The



**Bristol** figure wears a long flowing surcoat, open to the waist, where it is secured by a broad belt, from which depends by two straps a broad, heavy, cross-hilted sword. He is represented as cross-legged, and is holding the scabbard in the left hand, while the right grasped the hilt, and he has no shield. The figure of Gournay (1260) is similar, but the sword and belt are much lighter. The coif is not continuous with the hauberk, and on the left arm is a kite-shaped shield. The hands in this effigy are folded over the heart. On the north wall is the stiff and ungainly Jacobean effigy of George Upton, in plate armour. Another costly marble tomb commemorates Margaret Throckmorton, who died in 1635. She is represented in effigy with her husband, Sir Baynham Throckmorton, and her baby. There is a belated Gothic monument to a member of the Aldworth family, a prominent Bristol name, with two kneeling figures; its date is 1598: and lastly, the whole of the east wall of the chapel is filled with the ponderous Baynton tomb, said to be the work of Cibber, the sculptor, father of the better-known actor and dramatist, Colley Cibber.

His Hospital was not the only religious foundation of Maurice Gaunt; at the time of its erection the Friars first appeared in England, and in a few years spread over the whole country. The first invaders were the Black or Dominican Friars, who established themselves at Oxford in 1221, and in the course of a

very few years they appeared in Bristol. For them Gaunt began, in 1228 or 1229, to build a house which became one of the chief friaries of the order in England, and of which considerable remains still exist in careful keeping, forming an almost unique example in this country of the domestic buildings of a Dominican friary. As one Matthew Gurney is also mentioned as the founder (Tanner), it is probable that he assisted his relative in this foundation.

The  
Lesser  
Monastic and  
Collegiate  
Foundations

The site of the friary rests on the river Frome, at the opposite end of the semicircle, away from the hospital. It lies low, but in a position once pleasant, though now squalid. It stood immediately beneath the shadow of the castle, separated from it only by the river Frome; around were its gardens and orchard, with the open country beyond. Its precincts, known by the curious name of the Quakers' Friars—it having been the property of that denomination for two centuries—are so hemmed in by houses and factories that, of the hundreds of people who pass it daily, very few are aware of its existence; but it is to be found, adjoining the Coroner's Court, by following a narrow lane which leads out of Merchant Street nearly opposite to the Merchant Taylors' Almshouses. The church has perished, but the claustral area remains open, and on its south side is still to be seen a considerable part of its conventual building in good preservation. As the indefatigable William Worcester paced this, as well as every other important building in Bristol, we are able to form a

Bristol

good idea of the shape and proportions of the friary church. It stood on the north side of the existing remains, separated by the cloister, and consisted of a long narrow choir and a broad nave, with one wide or two narrow aisles, with a lofty but slender tower between nave and choir. The total length was about 170 feet, and the breadth of nave and aisles 62, so that it was on no mean scale. The present remains are arranged round a second court and comprise two parallel halls, running east and west, joined at the eastern end by a cloister-like passage. Each hall is raised on a basement story ; that to the north is the finer and larger, and was probably the refectory, though it has been assigned to the dormitory. The lesser hall, on the south, may have been the infirmary or a guest-house. Both in the main belong to the original thirteenth-century building, but the larger hall was remodelled a century later, when its present roof was constructed with the charming window at the west end. The graceful double-lancet windows of the lower story, with their slender dividing shafts, call for special notice and admiration. Externally these buildings are homely, but, with their high red-tiled roofs, very pleasing. They owe their preservation to the fact that they were granted to two of the city companies, the Smiths and the Bakers, for their common halls, and on the decay of the trade companies they passed into the possession of the Society of Friends, who use them as schools, and have built a chapel on part of the site. The connection of the Bakers with this site is, however, far earlier than the

Reformation, for their guild chapel was in the friary church.

The  
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The Franciscans were not long in following their black brethren to Bristol. According to Leland a friary was already in existence in 1234—that is, within ten years of the introduction of the order into England. It was situated in Lewin's Mead, a little to the north of the Frome, and west of the priory of St. James and its open space, while the lower slope of St. Michael's Hill formed a precipitous barrier behind it. Church and conventual buildings have almost disappeared, one small fragment of the latter alone remaining. From William Worcester we learn that the church consisted of a nave or preaching-hall, of four bays, with wide aisles; in all about 84 feet by 81, with a narrow aisleless choir of equal length, almost completely separated from the nave by the usual slender friary tower, in this case only 12 feet square. The only remaining portion of the friary is to be found by penetrating the maze of narrow and unsavoury lanes on the north side of Lewin's Mead. It is a small hall or chapel, more probably the former as it faces north and south, and possibly the hall of the lodgings of the superior. It now forms two small cottages, and sash windows have been inserted in the place of its two tall Gothic windows, whose traceried heads, however, still remain. Internally it contains a ground floor and a lofty hall above. The latter measures 30 feet by 10 feet 9 inches,

**Bristol** and has an arched cradle roof with moulded principals. It apparently belongs to the beginning of the fourteenth century. This pretty room is now divided by a floor into two stories. At the dissolution of the monasteries the site of the Greyfriars was granted to the mayor and citizens for public uses.

The Carmelites also had a house in Bristol, which is said to have been established by Edward 1. before he came to the throne. It was considered by Leland to be the fairest friary in Bristol, and its grounds were very extensive. They joined those of Gaunt's Hospital on the east, and stretched from St. Augustine's Quay back to the street on the hillside above now known as Park Row. No trace of this friary now remains, unless it be the niche at the corner of Frogmore Street and Pipe Lane, which marks the boundary between its lands and those of the hospital. The name of Pipe Lane should serve to remind modern Bristol citizens that to the Carmelite friars a large proportion of their ancestors owed the inestimable benefit of a supply of pure water; the townsmen to the south of the Avon were similarly indebted to the Augustinians. The grounds of this friary were purchased by the corporation at the dissolution, and afterwards sold in parcels. The main portion was purchased by Sir John Young, who built a very fine house which was usually known as the Great House: here Queen Elizabeth was entertained, and after her most

royal and distinguished visitors to Bristol for more than a century. It afterwards became a sugar refinery, and was then purchased by Colston the philanthropist, and adapted for the purpose of a school. It finally disappeared in a street improvement, and its site is partly occupied by the well-known assembly room, Colston Hall.

The  
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On the upper part of the estate of the friary another house was built in the Elizabethan period, which still remains. This is the Red Lodge, in Park Row, which bears tablets commemorating the fact that it was the residence of James Cowles Prichard, the ethnologist, and of Mary Carpenter, the philanthropist. Its interior is an exceptionally fine example of the art of the period.

Two minor religious foundations on the Gloucestershire side of the Avon still remain for notice. The Hospital of St. Bartholomew at the bottom of the steep ascent of Christmas Steps survives in a much mutilated but still beautiful doorway and arcaded porch of the purest Early English architecture, built into a typical Bristol house of the seventeenth century. By the side of the doorway still stands the graceful torso of a life-sized figure. This little hospital and priory, for it was both, is one of the earliest of Bristol institutions, reaching back as far as the year 1205; but it was one of the earliest to perish, as its buildings were sold in 1533 to the executors of Robert Thorne, a merchant tailor of London, who with his brother Nicholas was sheriff of Bristol in 1528. In the last-mentioned year

## Bristol



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL

the two brothers had already founded a Grammar School in the hospital premises, so that their original use had then ceased. The other foundation was also a hospital, but unlike the last it has endured to the present time. It was the last of the pre-Reformation endowments, having been founded in 1492 by John Foster, merchant, mayor in 1481. This building also adjoins Christmas Steps, but at the top of the ascent, and its little chapel, with the rare dedication to the Three Kings of Cologne,

still remains. Owing to street improvements the rest of the building has been removed and replaced by a pleasing open quadrangle of brick and timber. Beneath the east window of the chapel outside may be seen a curious row of niches or sediles, which local tradition says were erected for the convenience of begging friars: unfortunately the tradition is directly contradicted by the date 1669, which appears above them.

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The Somerset side was not devoid of monastic foundations, but they were small and have totally disappeared. There was a house of Augustinian Friars in Temple Fee, just within the walls, to the south-east of the Temple Church; a small leper hospital, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, in Redcliffe; and a hospital of St. Katherine at Bedminster, built by the second Robert, Lord Berkeley, about the year 1200, whose remains were removed a few years ago to be replaced by a tobacco factory.

Lastly, in the Alsatia outside the town to the east of the castle, there was certainly one leper hospital, and perhaps two. That of St. John Baptist was built by John, Earl of Moreton, afterwards King John. In the fifteenth century its use seems to have gone with the disappearance of leprosy in England, and its revenues were transferred by Bishop Carpenter of Worcester to his college of Westbury-on-Trym in 1450. Both William Worcester and Leland mention other small religious houses

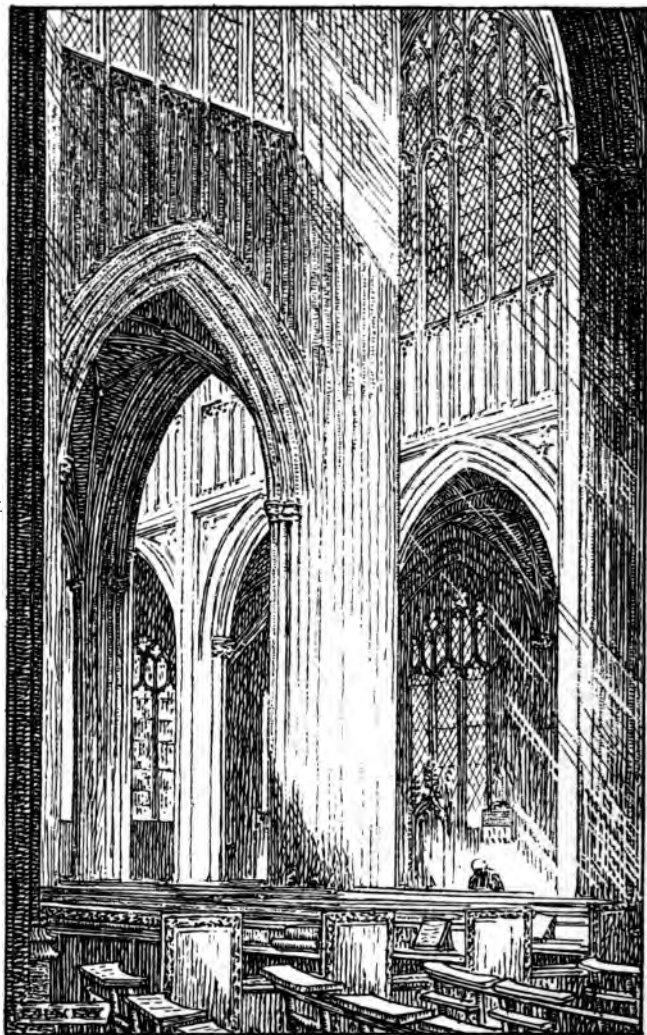


**Bristol** which have entirely disappeared, and there were numerous hospitals and almshouses of a purely secular character.



**ST. JAMES'S CHURCH**





ST. MARY REDCLIFFE

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PARISH CHURCHES



THE LEANING TOWER

THE churches described in the preceding chapters are by no means the only ones which deserve to be visited in Bristol, the city of churches. From the top of Brandon Hill, and from other points of vantage on the neighbouring heights, a group of towers and spires may be seen, only rivalled, if they are rivalled, by those of Oxford: and almost every street in the old town is dominated by its own tower. During the Middle Ages there were eighteen or nineteen churches, as well as numerous chapels, and of these thirteen still remain, nearly all of which are interesting on account either of their architecture or their associations. The chief church-building period was during

Bristol the time of the commercial supremacy of Bristol in the fifteenth century; but several were rebuilt during the very prosperous eighteenth century, and most contain examples of the woodwork of that period, though not a little has been wantonly destroyed during more recent restorations. Most of the churches were crowded together within, or upon, the original line of walls, though four are suburban on the Gloucestershire side, while three are beyond the river in what used to be the independent township of Redcliffe.

It will be well to depart from the topographical order to visit, first, the celebrated church of St. Mary Redcliffe, the great glory of Bristol. This church is situated on the left, or Somerset, bank of the Avon, some distance below Bristol Bridge, on a low cliff of red sandstone overlooking the river, and is approached by the long, narrow Redcliffe Street, once a picturesque old thoroughfare, now a busy commercial street. It is an invariable rule in describing this church to quote Queen Elizabeth, that it is 'the fairest, the goodliest, the most famous parish church in England.' This dictum is probably apocryphal, but Leland, who was no doubt a better judge, considered it the finest church of all. Among the churches below cathedral scale, St. Mary is exceeded in size by those of Yarmouth, Coventry, Hull, Boston, Newcastle, and Newark, but it excels all these in the harmony and dignity of its proportions and in the grace and richness of its detail, and it is almost alone among the parish churches of

this country in being roofed throughout by a stone vault.

The  
Parish  
Churches

It is not a little curious that so large a church was not even a parish church until the year 1853. It was founded as a chapel of ease to the small parish church of Bedminster by the Berkeleys, the lords of that manor, for their tenantry, the Men of Berkeley as they were frequently called; but the church as we now see it is entirely the creation of the wealth and piety of the merchant princes of Bristol in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. It seems almost as if the rich merchants were inspired by jealousy of the neighbouring monastery, and that they determined that their church should not only rival the abbey in size and beauty, but that it should contrast with it in every particular. Thus, while the abbey is broad and low, at Redcliffe height is the feature most insisted on. At the abbey there is no clerestory, here it is of unusually bold proportions; the monastic church has transepts indeed, but they are short, low, and without aisles, here they are boldly spreading, as lofty as the body of the church, and possess the rare feature of aisles on both sides; there is a solid central tower, here a tall and elegant spire at the west end: and finally, while the abbey church is studiously plain externally, St. Mary's is covered with panelling from its base to its pierced and traceried parapet.

The present church is the third which has occupied the site. Of the first Norman church of the Berkeleys

## Bristol

nothing remains but a few sculptured stones, and it was dilapidated in the thirteenth century, when it was rebuilt on a grand scale, not by the overlord, but by the munificence of the citizens. Of the second, or Early English, church we shall find on entering that enough remains to enable us to form a good idea of its size and appearance. Like the present church, it was vaulted throughout in stone, and it seems to have covered almost the same area, but its height was about 14 feet less. The third and present edifice forms a complete and harmonious whole, but the period of its erection extended over a hundred and fifty years, with two long gaps, so that it exhibits work of three distinct periods. During the reign of Edward I. the upper portion of the tower was erected, with its lofty spire, and the very charming outer north porch was added, and then there was a long pause till the year 1376, when William Canynges, the elder, built the body of the church from 'the cross-aisle downwards.' The east end of the choir, the south transept, and the whole of the south side of the nave, are transitional in character, showing the change from the 'Decorated' style of architecture to the earliest 'Perpendicular,' and this portion may undoubtedly be assigned to Canynges. It is probable that the process of rebuilding continued almost uninterruptedly, and that when the spire fell in 1446 the church was practically complete. If this be so, the more famous William Canynges, the younger, has received far more credit than he is justly entitled to, as to him is generally attributed the whole of the

north side of the church, and all the upper portion except in the south transept, including the vaulted roofs. It is probable that what is really owing to him is the vaulting of the south nave aisle, which is later in date and inferior in character to the rest of the vaulted roofs, and such repairs as were necessitated by the fall of the spire. The latter was not then rebuilt, and a stunted fragment only remained till the year 1872, when it was again completed according to the original design.

The church is well isolated from surrounding buildings, so that excellent views may be obtained both from the north and from the south. The west front, high above the narrow street, is seen to less advantage, but it is the least satisfactory portion of the building, overshadowed and dwarfed as it is by the immense mass of the tower. The full length of the church is best seen from the higher ground to the south, but it is uncomfortably cut into two on this side by the absence of panelling in the transept; and undoubtedly the most striking view is that from the north-east, where commanding height is gained by the fall of the ground, and where tower and porch group picturesquely with the later church. The tower, at the north-west angle, is crowned by a spire rising to the height of 292 feet, measured from external base to vane—a height exceeded by four steeples only in England; while in mass and in dignity it is second only to Salisbury. Its lower stage belongs to the Early English period, the upper to the Decorated, and both are excellent examples of the more



Bristol

ornate work of their respective epochs. Passing eastward from the tower on the north side of the church, the north porch is reached, the most remarkable and sumptuous portion of the building. This is hexagonal in plan, with hexagonal buttresses at the angles; it is three stages in height, with doors below, a large window in each face above, and a low attic story still higher. The peculiar arrangement of the doors will be best seen internally, but the intricate sculptures with which they as well as the superstructure are adorned should be noticed. This sculpture, like most of that which adorns the exterior of the church, is a modern reproduction of ancient work which had perished beyond the possibility of preservation. Passing further eastward, the flank is broken by the projection of the transept, here raised upon a crypt where, in 1653, a number of Dutch prisoners, taken by Admiral Blake in his naval victory over Van Tromp, were incarcerated, and yet again by the three-storied house built by the younger Canynges as a residence for chantry priests. At the north-east corner of the churchyard will be observed a memorial to Chatterton: a tall base or pillar carrying a small statue of the poet in the garb of a blue-coat boy. From this point the road used to pass actually under the Lady-chapel by a vaulted passage now disused; it now passes behind the church. Taking this road, the south side is gained, and here it is evident that the transept on this side was built before the final design was adopted, as its windows are smaller and of an earlier type, and the walls are destitute of the

panelling which covers the rest of the church. The great beauty of the buttresses at the end of this transept should be noticed. Passing along the south side of the nave, observing its lofty clerestory supported by graceful flying buttresses, the circuit of the church is completed at the south porch, the usual entrance. This porch, though without the elaboration of that at the other side, has considerable elegance: its detail shows that it is fairly early, and it is probably part of the work of the elder Canynges.

Entering by this doorway, the grace, beauty, and harmony of the interior burst at once upon the visitor's gaze; the effect is one of lantern-like lightness, due to the flood of light admitted by the continuous series of great clerestory windows, combined with that of great height. The actual elevation is unusual for a church of the size of St. Mary's, but the effect is vastly increased by the suppression of every horizontal line and the accentuation of all the vertical; the eye is carried from the floor to the rich vaulted roof by tall, slender, unbroken vaulting shafts, and, in the nave at least, the ramifications of the ribs lead on to the very summit of the roof. In the choir and transept the vaults are of a different, and not quite so satisfying, pattern. The architectural detail is unusually refined for the period; the bosses of the roof, said to be upwards of eleven hundred in number, whose effect is heightened by gilding, deserve particular attention. The best general view is that from the west end of the nave, looking east; but the view in the transept is fine, and the multiplicity of columns

**Bristol** entailed by the double transept aisles gives rise to some charming oblique vistas.

It is now time to examine a little more in detail ; and first there may be noticed, high up on the inner wall of the tower, a portion of the earlier church. This is an Early English vaulting shaft with a sculptured capital recalling contemporary work at Wells, originally the diocesan church of Redcliffe. Springing from this shaft there may still be seen traces of the wall-ribs of two vaulted bays of roofing, showing that the early church was, like the present one, a stone-roofed building, and that its height was about 40 feet. On the wall below is the mural monument of Sir William Penn, Cromwell's admiral, well-known to readers of Pepys, and father of the more celebrated founder of Pennsylvania ; it is surmounted by his funeral achievement, consisting of his body armour, with helmet, gauntlets, spurs, sword, and targe, over which hang the remnants of a standard and a banner. Beneath the arch opening to the tower will be seen some excellent ironwork dating from early in the eighteenth century, and more of it screens off the west end of the south aisle ; this ironwork was originally in use as a choir-screen. Passing up the nave, there will be noticed in the south aisle two over-elaborate monumental arches of the Berkeley type ; the effigies they cover are interesting as representing the younger William Canynges and Joan, his wife, the former in civilian costume. On reaching the crossing in the centre of the church it will be seen that the transepts are much narrower than the

nave, and that to maintain a correct proportion their roofs are brought down about 6 feet. In the northern limb the windows, for the sake of external harmony, range with those of nave and choir, and the clever way in which the vaulted roof is, as it were, suspended between them without obscuring them deserves attention. In the south transept, on the other hand, which was erected before the general design was finally fixed, the windows are lower—a gain internally, but externally a great defect. These windows are peculiar, if not unique, in that their tracery is set in a glazed band of quatrefoils. The treatment of the clerestory of the choir at Lichfield, which was rising about the same time, may be compared with this at Redcliffe; there a similar but unpierced band occupies the soffit of each window arch. The south transept contains some monuments of interest. The first is a second and more costly effigy of Canynges, in priestly robes, said, but without foundation, to have been brought from the collegiate church at Westbury-upon-Trym, of which foundation he was dean at the time of his death. Near it there is an earlier effigy, rude and disproportionate, but of much interest. It represents a member of one of the minor ecclesiastical or clerkly orders, who carries a pouch or purse, and it is popularly ascribed to Canynges's Almoner. On the floor near there is a slab to the memory of Canynges's cook, with a knife and skimmer incised. From this transept a doorway through a stone screen leads to the choir aisles which form, with the east bay of the choir, a processional path round

**Bristol**    the latter. From the aisles good views are obtained of the upper part of the choir, with its harmonious modern glass. From the east end opens the Lady-chapel, almost the latest portion of the building; this contains a good brass, and there are others in the choir. The north aisle contains two altar-tombs to Sir Thomas Mede and wife (1475) and his brother William, with the effigies of the two former: these tombs are covered by rich though coarse canopies. Near at hand a small door leads to the little house of the chantry priests, now used as a vestry, from which a staircase descends to the large and airy crypt beneath the transept. Continuing the circuit of the church, an altar-tomb may be seen in the north transept, with the effigy of one of the Berkeleys, a knight in mail. Retracing our steps down the nave, a door is reached on the right by which access is gained to the north porch, or rather porches, for there are two. The inner one is the earliest existing part of the church, and is Early English in character, and somewhat early in the period. It is too dark to be well seen, but it has a bold vault and richly carved capitals to the shafts of its arcading: the square abacus seen in the capitals is a rare feature in English Gothic art. Above this is a chamber with a fireplace, probably the dwelling-place of a priest or caretaker. The enriched outer arch of this porch was cut away when the large 'Decorated' porch was added beyond. A few steps descend into this unique feature, the great glory of St. Mary Redcliffe. It is a hexagonal building of great height, with a domed

vault, lighted by a noble range of windows and surrounded, except when pierced by doors, by a canopied arcade with a stone bench or seat. Besides the two great doorways there are smaller doors in the north-west and south-east sides, while on the south-west there is a relic-chamber, with openings protected by gratings. The full meaning of this singular and beautiful chamber is probably not understood. Polygonal porches occur at Ludlow and Chipping Norton, but they have neither the elaboration nor the peculiar arrangement of this one. Its general effect is that of a small chapter-house, but its numerous doors would make it an uncomfortable place of meeting, and there was no collegiate foundation here, and therefore no chapter. William Worcester describes it as a Lady-chapel, but there has evidently been no provision for an altar. The suggestion is no doubt correct that the two oblique doors were for the accommodation of processions of visitors to view the relics displayed in the grated chamber. High up above the porch is the muniment-room, where Thomas Chatterton pretended to have discovered the poems of Rowley and other forged manuscripts, with which he practised on the credulity of the local antiquarians and historians, and even deceived many who were not blinded by local prejudice. Returning once more to the church, the ground-story of the tower is entered through a narrow lancet-shaped arch. The immense mass of the tower is best appreciated from observation of the roomy apartment it contains. This portion of the building is of Early English date, but

**Bristol** perceptibly later than the inner porch; it contains some interesting old glass and many fragments of sculptured stone, which were too much worn to be replaced at the restoration. It contains, too, an effigy in low relief of John Lavyngton, a fourteenth-century priest, and a coloured statue of Queen Elizabeth, which appears to be a good portrait. The church has other interesting associations than those with Canynges and Chatterton. Hogarth painted three huge pictures for its altar, his sole incursion into the realm of religious art; they are not now in the church, but are preserved, though in a terribly ruined condition, at the Bristol Academy of Arts. It was here that Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, in October 1795; and here, in the following month, Southey wedded her sister Edith, and parted from her at the church door to leave for Portugal. Not far from the church there is a thirteenth-century hermitage excavated in the red sandstone cliff which gives its name to the district.

The other churches must be dismissed more briefly. Hard by the High Cross, at the very centre of the town, there were three, two of which still remain. All Saints' or All Hallows' is marked externally by the tall simple campanile with its crowning pillared cupola, added to the old church in the eighteenth century, which dominates Corn Street much as does Bow Steeple Cheapside. The church itself is almost hidden by houses, some of which stand actually upon its aisle roofs. It contains within it the earliest piece

of building now remaining in Bristol, though it was not probably the earliest in the date of its foundation, and consists of a long narrow nave and chancel with lofty side-aisles, of late Perpendicular date, but at the west end there are on each side two plain massive round arches supported by squat circular columns with cushion capitals, whose features mark them as belonging to the earliest years of the twelfth century. Of its numerous monuments one only calls for special notice—that of Colston, the philanthropist, at the east end of the south aisle; a tall tomb of Renaissance character with a life-like effigy of Bristol's great benefactor, and a list of his known charities and endowments. This church was peculiarly associated with the Guild of the Calendars, a religious foundation of great but unknown antiquity. The house of the guild was removed here from the neighbouring Trinity or Christ Church by Earl Robert of Gloucester, early in the twelfth century, and in 1216 it received a charter from Henry III. 'in consideration of the ancient and kindly duties it fulfilled.' This fraternity like other guilds included laity both male and female in its numbers, but differed in being also a collegiate institution of clergy under the governance of a prior. Primarily its functions, like those of other religious guilds, were the visitation of the sick and the provision of prayers for the souls of the dead; but its duties also included the conversion of the Jews and the provision of a library, which was open to the public daily from seven to eleven, the prior attending to explain the Scriptures to any that asked



Bristol him, and delivering once a week a public lecture. The library was located in a room over the aisle of the church, and in 1466, when it was destroyed by fire, it contained eight hundred volumes. It has been supposed that another of the guild duties was the care of the town archives, but it is probable that this suggestion was merely due to the fact that the town-clerk, Ricart, to whose chronicle so much of our information about the early history of Bristol is due, was a functionary of the church and a member of the guild. All Saints' possesses a wealth of early records, some dating from the thirteenth century. One of the most curious is the bequest of a curse: the widow of one Peter Worcester illegally gave land to the church, and devised that if the heirs sought to reclaim it the Dean (rural dean) of Bristol should publicly excommunicate the said heirs till they desisted. It is worthy of note that the piece of property in question still belongs to the church. The most interesting of these records belong to the service of the 'General Mind.' This service began here in 1407, when it was ordained that the clergy should once a year 'urge the hole paryshe to ye general mynde, and if any man absent hymself he be fined 4d., if a counsellman 1s. 4d.' It began with a simple feast, and then the congregation adjourned to the church where the priest read, first, 'these be the names of the good doers.' Then followed the names with a record of benefactions, and to each the people cried out 'God ha mercy on his soule.' After the list of good doers followed that of the doers of evil, with their mis-

deeds, and after each came the response ' God amende him.' Among the evil doers were occasionally eminent citizens, including even the great William Canynges. The record of subsequent years generally showed that the desired amendment took place.

At the angle of the crossways, diametrically opposite to the building just noticed, is Christ Church, which superseded an earlier church of the Holy Trinity. The present edifice was erected about the year 1782; it is almost entirely concealed by shops, only its fine and lofty steeple being visible from the streets. Internally it is a good example of the later English Renaissance architecture, the design being an adaptation of Gibbs' great church of St. Martin in the Fields. It differs from its model in that the ranges of Corinthian pillars which support the vaulted roof are attenuated beyond all precedent; they were designed to be partly masked by galleries which have since been removed. Southey, the poet, was christened in the old church, of which his father was warden. He narrates (*Life and Correspondence*) that he was present at the laying of the foundation stone of the new building, and placed money under the stone; he calls to mind, too, the quaint old clock with quarter-jacks, which is seen in old prints, but which like so many other objects of interest disappeared in process of restoration.

With the parish of Christ Church is incorporated that of St. Ewen, whose church stood at the opposite angle of the street, on the site of the present Council House: before the latter was built it had been pro-

Bristol



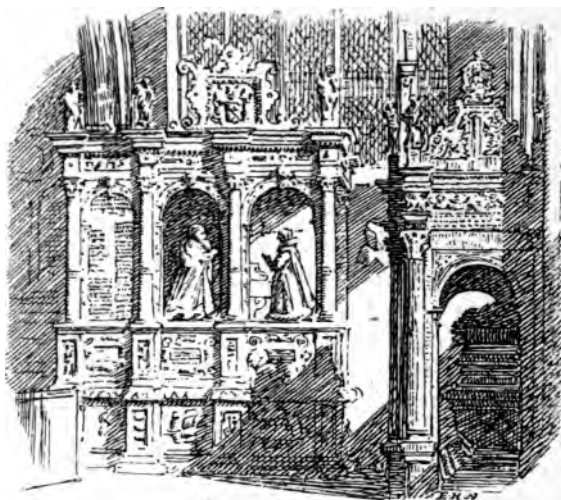
HIGH STREET AND CHRIST CHURCH

posed to convert the church into a public library. From the windows of St. Ewen's King Edward iv. witnessed the execution of the Lancastrian leader Sir Baldwin Fulford. Hard by, in the same street, stood another church, now destroyed, that of St.

Werburch, whose handsome tower remained till within living memory, when it was removed to widen Corn Street, and re-erected in a northern suburb.

Hidden away behind the lofty gabled half-timber houses in Mary-le-Port Street is the small church of St. Mary le Port, of no great beauty or interest, but with a pleasing tower. It contains the fine eagle lectern of brass, given to the cathedral by Sub-dean Williamson in 1698, and sold in 1812 as old metal by the then dean; it was purchased by a citizen, William Ady, and given to this church, on condition that it should remain here for ever. The dean's more enlightened successors have endeavoured in vain to recover it.

St. Peter's is by common consent the mother church of Bristol, and is believed to have been the parish church of the old royal manor of Barton, but the first definite mention of it occurs in 1130. It stands almost under the shadow of the castle at the extreme east end of the early town, and outside the wall which the citizens built in 1313 to complete the circuit. It is a large and airy but plain building, for the most part of the fifteenth century, but the walls of its massive tower are probably of Norman work, if not even earlier. In the interior may be seen a local peculiarity in the architecture, in that the windows are not so much openings in the wall as the filling in of a continuous range of moulded and shafted arches. This treatment, which is very effective, occurs also at the Temple and St. John's Churches and elsewhere, but nowhere so fully developed as at St. Peter's, where



TOMBS AT ST. PETER'S

it is best seen in the south aisle. The church was once much larger, but most of the chancel has long been destroyed, and the blank wall at the east end is adorned and partly concealed by a lofty Corinthian altar-piece of carved woodwork, erected in 1697 by one Mitchell of London at a cost of £140. There are several interesting monuments here: at the east end of the south aisle a lofty canopied tomb of early Jacobean date, rich with barbaric carving, commemorates a Lady Newton of Barr's Court; and near it, under the arches of an equally rich but chaster example of Renaissance art, kneel the realistic effigies of Robert Aldworth, one of the best-known of Bristol's

merchants, and his wife, 1634; they lived at the great house opposite, now known as St. Peter's Hospital. On the floor between these two tombs is the cadaver, or corpse-like effigy of a man unknown, and there is too a brass of rather unusual character, representing Robert Loud (chaplain, 1461), in eucharistic vestments, which still bears signs that it was once jewelled. In a nameless grave in the churchyard lie the remains of the unfortunate, if undeserving, poet Richard Savage, who died in Newgate Gaol hard by, and received burial from the charity of his gaoler, aided by a contribution given by the well-known Countess of Huntingdon. St. Peter's, like so many Bristol churches, is rich in metal-work, and it possesses some valuable records. One of these relates that in 1613 Ellen, wife of Thomas Clements, objected to receive the Sacrament otherwise than sitting; 'to receive it kneeling was a sin to her, because she hath no warrant out of Scripture to receive it so, and therefore she makes a conscience of it.' On the south side of the churchyard stands the great house now known as St. Peter's Hospital, one of the most striking examples of enriched timber building in the country. From 1402, the date of the earliest portion of the house, till 1580 it was the property and the home of the once prominent family of Norton, and in 1607 it was bought by Robert Aldworth, mayor and benefactor, one of the subscribers to the company of adventurers who colonised Newfoundland; he added the gabled front to the older building. The house was afterwards used as a mint, and in 1698 it

Bristol became the property of the Corporation of the Poor, the oldest Board of Guardians in England. For a time it was used as a workhouse, and it is still in the hands of the corporation, or rather of their modern representatives, and provides accommodation for the parochial offices. The exterior is very picturesque, and rich with an art which, if uncouth and barbaric, is distinctly effective; and the interior contains part of the Gothic house of the Nortons, and a wealth of plaster-work and panelling, with some really fine chimney-pieces.

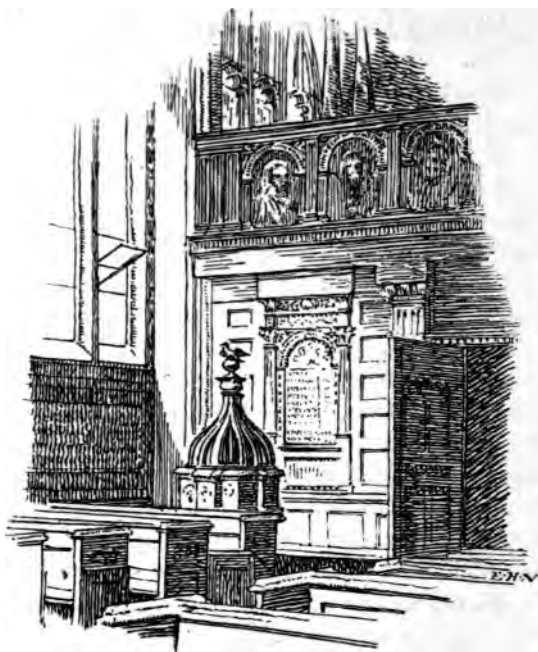
With the completion in the thirteenth century of the second line of defence the inner wall lost its *raison d'être*, and was utilised in part as a site for new churches, no fewer than five being built upon it. Of these two remain—St. Nicholas, at the foot of High Street, overlooking the bridge, and St. John the Baptist, at the opposite side of the old town. The chancel of St. Nicholas stood actually over the gate at the lower end of High Street, and was approached from the church by an imposing flight of twelve steps of black and white marble. It was removed in 1762, to effect a much-needed improvement in the access to the city, and soon afterwards it was decided to rebuild the body of the church, and the work was completed in 1769. Gothic architecture perhaps never wholly died in Bristol, and the style was chosen for the new building; and it is fair to say that though, as might be expected, the result is glaringly incorrect, it is by no means unsuccessful, the long ranges of great windows

placed high up being very effective both without and within. The church proper consists of a great hall, without pillars or structural chancel, and it contains valuable contemporary wood-carving and metal-work, both in iron and brass, and some interesting communion plate. In the base of its plain but lofty and well-proportioned steeple is the monument, with effigy, of John Whitson, founder of the Red Maids' School; and another benefactor buried here was one of the Thornes, founders of the Grammar School. Beneath the church there is a good fifteenth-century crypt, vaulted in two aisles. It is on the side toward the town about twelve feet below ground, but taking advantage of the difference of level within and without, it is entered on the south, or outer, side, directly from the street. This crypt provided accommodation for several guilds, one of which, that of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was in effect a wealthy bridge trust. St. Nicholas became the richest and most fashionable of the city churches, and was intimately connected with the corporation and with civic life. Here Latimer preached, and here too another martyr, the Scotsman Wishart, made public recantation of his heretical teaching.

The little church of St. John the Baptist should not be left unvisited. It stands at the foot of Broad Street with its tower, which was common to it and the destroyed church of St. Lawrence, actually upon the old north gate of the town which still remains, adorned with statues of Brennus and



## Bristol



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Belinus, the fabled founders of the city. The interior, which is very quaint and possesses an old-world charm, is approached by steps from the street. It is long and narrow, consisting of a single aisle only, but variety is gained by the way in which its continuous range of large Perpendicular windows are recessed in richly moulded and shafted arches, and by the device of raising the eastern bay of the

nave to form a low tower or lantern. The great glory of the church is its wealth of Jacobean wood-work, especially the panelled gallery at the west end, and the series of paintings which adorn it. These are sombre in tone and dark with age, but rarely effective as a decoration. Here is preserved the now uncommon feature of an hour-glass, once a usual adjunct to the pulpit. Under a window on the north side may be seen the altar-tomb of the founder with his statue clothed in his aldermanic robes. As at St. Nicholas there is a vaulted crypt below the church, which contains some interesting monuments, including memorials to members of the family of Rowley, to which is supposed to have belonged the priest upon whom Chatterton fathered his forgeries. The church was founded or rebuilt by Walter Frampton, three times mayor in the latter part of the fourteenth century, who was one of a class of citizens fortunately never wanting in Bristol. Not only did he build the church in his lifetime, but by his will he provided dowries for poor maidens, contributed to the relief of the blind and lame, and of the religious of the mendicant orders, and left money for the repair of the highways and bridges. At this church too there was a General Mind for all good-doers and benefactors; but unlike the service at All Saints', it does not seem to have provided for the remembrance of the evil-doers. In later years Whitfield preached from its pulpit. The church of St. Lawrence formerly joined that of St. John to the west, but it was

**Bristol** destroyed in 1580, and its parish united with St. John's. Two other churches once stood on the wall—that of St. Giles, destroyed, according to Worcester, as early as 1319, over the gate at the bottom of Small Street; and St. Leonard's, in a similar position at the foot of Corn Street. The latter was not removed until 1766, when its parish was joined to that of St. Nicholas. Its crypt still remains beneath the neighbouring houses.

We have seen that in the twelfth century a suburb had already grown up outside the old walls to the west, and at an early date the church of St. Stephen was built beyond the Frome for the accommodation of its people. The church was entirely rebuilt between 1450 and 1490 at the joint cost of the abbey of Glastonbury and the parishioners, and the lofty and ornate tower, which forms so conspicuous a feature in general views of the city, was added by John Shipward, who was mayor in 1453. This tower with its lofty over-sailing parapet and pinnacles of open work has received perhaps more admiration than its merits entitle it to. The present finish is a reproduction of the original, destroyed in the great storm of 1703. The church itself is a large but externally a coarse building of late Perpendicular architecture, with a very charming and delicately treated porch; internally it is a particularly satisfactory example of a late town church. There is no structural distinction between nave and chancel, the arcades of seven lofty and graceful arches on each side

running the whole length of the building, surmounted by a light and airy clerestory. The curious treatment of the capitals of the pillars calls for attention, and the panelled roof of oak also deserves notice. There are some noteworthy monuments here: under arches in the north wall are three effigies in civilian garb, relics of the earlier church, one of which is attributed to the famous Thomas Blanket; and at the east end of the south aisle is the gorgeously coloured recumbent statue of Sir George Snygge, judge and recorder, who died in 1617. A mural tablet commemorates Martin Pring, a sailor who attempted the discovery of the Northwest Passage, and was sometime General to the East Indies. Among the treasures of this church is a silver-gilt reliquary which once contained a portion of the true Cross. Still connected with St. Stephen's Church is a wealthy and important guild, that of St. Stephen's Ringers, from which it has received many benefits, and one lamentable and irreparable act of destruction. Until recent years there was a pulpit here, bearing the date 1620, which was one of the most remarkable and striking pieces of wood-carving of its period in England. This has been cut down to form a chair for the use of the guild, and has been replaced by a costly and pretentious, but feeble, example of the bridecake form of art.

Another early suburban church is that of St. Philip and St. Jacob, at the opposite end of the town beyond the site of the castle. This was in

**Bristol** existence as early as 1174, and is said by Worcester to have been the church of a small Benedictine priory. It stands low and its surroundings are squalid, but its large churchyard has been prettily laid out as a public garden, and is bordered by large old houses which retain an air of faded dignity and distinction. The church is broad and spacious, and presents some peculiarities in planning, notably in the spreading segmental arches of its nave arcades. The cradle roof of the nave is a good example of fourteenth-century woodwork. The tower is at the east end of the south aisle; its lower stage, neglected and used as a depository for rubbish, contains in the capitals of its vaulting shafts some exquisite examples of the carving of the best period of Early English architecture, a period comparatively little represented in Bristol. There is here a Norman font, a relic of an earlier church, and some valuable monuments, one of which—a mutilated fragment of a colossal effigy—is popularly, though without authority, ascribed to Robert, Duke of Normany, the eldest son of the Conqueror. St. Philip's was the parish church of a wide district extending far outside the old borough and county, and including in its limits the great forest or chase of Kingswood.

Two other suburban churches on the Gloucestershire side demand mention, though they scarcely repay a visit; one is that of St. Augustine the Less, built as a parish church for the abbey precincts, the last resting-place of Sir William Draper, the

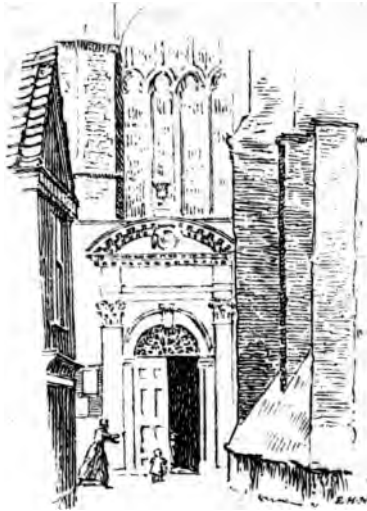
opponent of 'Junius.' The Perpendicular tower of the other, St. Michael's, forms a prominent feature on the northern heights, and marks the growth of the town in the fifteenth century. The street in which it stands, St. Michael's Hill, is unusually picturesque, and commands a noble view of the towers and spires of the older town.

Now recrossing the bridge into Somerset, the district on the left is the Temple Fee, given by Earl Robert, in 1147, to the Knights Templars. On the destruction of that order it passed, like other of their possessions, into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers, who retained it until the suppression of the religious orders, and for a long time had a separate jurisdiction here, which was not given up without a struggle which did not entirely cease till the Reformation. There was neither preceptory nor commandery here, as has been sometimes asserted, but the knights early built a church for the parishioners. The original church, on the site of the present building, is said to have been oval or elliptical in form, but no trace of it remains. In 1299 the chapel of St. Catherine, then newly built, was granted to the Guild of Weavers, the wealthiest of the trade guilds, whose members mostly dwelt in Tucker and Temple Streets in this parish. The following account of an incident which occurred in this church appears in an MS. note by the Rev. A. S. Catcott, a former vicar:—'John Stone, Mayor, when he was at Mass in Queen Mary's reign there came a weaver out of a little door from the Weavers' Chapel into the chancel,

The  
Parish  
Churches

**Bristol** and said "Fie upon this idolatrous worship," upon which this John Stone caused his sergeants to apprehend him, and he was burnt for the same near the gallows on St. Michael's Hill, as may be seen in Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. John Stone's name does not appear in the list of mayors until 1562, nor was he sheriff in Mary's reign; there seems no doubt, however, about the general truth of the story. Edward Colston was baptized in this church in 1636; and in 1780 John Wesley preached here, and again in 1782 and 1787: he has placed on record his admiration of the building.

The Temple or Holy Cross Church ranks next to the Cathedral and St. Mary Redcliffe in size and interest among the Bristol churches, but it is chiefly known to fame on account of its leaning tower, which in a height of 114 feet overhangs about 4. The sinking which led to the inclination seems to have occurred before the belfry stage was erected, for there is evidence of an attempt to remedy the defect in the upper story. The singularity has long been a matter of interest to tourists, for upon Trinity Sunday, 1568, Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, came from Bath to Bristol, accompanied with the Earl of Worcester, Lord Berkeley, and others. The duke went to Redcliffe, May 24, to sermon, and after to Temple, where he had the bells rung to try the truth of the tower's shaking at such times (Evans, *Outlines of History*). Braun, in his *Theatrum Urbium* (1576), records the fact that the tower had become torn asunder from the body of the church, leaving a great



THE TEMPLE CHURCH

chink from the roof to the foundation, and says that Ortelius, the geographer, wrote him word that himself put a stone the size of a goose-egg into this chink (when the bells were rung), which he saw himself give downward as the place was narrow or wide, and at length by the frequent collision was squeezed to pieces. The tower is much decayed, and has neither battlements nor pinnacles, but it is a noble and imposing structure, more worthy admiration than the more admired St. Stephen's. The lower stages, plain, were built about 1397; the rich upper story added, according to William Worcester, in 1460. The interior of



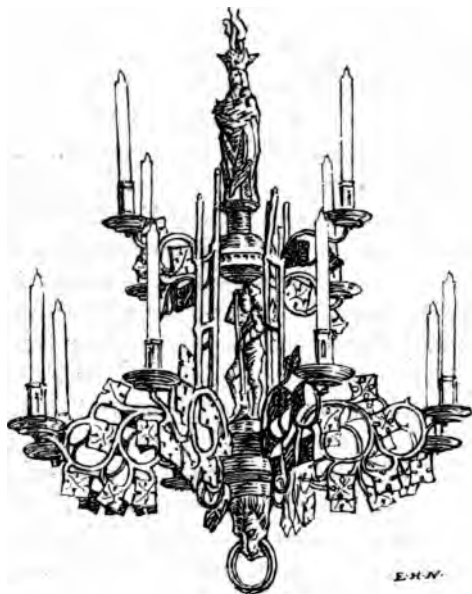
**Bristol** the church is stately and spacious; the nave and aisles are wide and lofty, and are divided by arcades of tall arches the full height of the building, carried by slender and graceful pillars. The chancel, which is earlier, dating from about the year 1300, is long and low. At least as early is the chapel of St. Catherine on the north; the little door through which the indiscreet weaver appeared may still be seen. The Temple is singularly rich in objects of interest; especially to be noticed is the chandelier of latten, of the fourteenth century, which hangs near the entrance to the chancel, with its statuettes, St. George and the Dragon below, and the Blessed Virgin with the Infant Jesus above—one of the most important examples of English mediæval metal-work now remaining. It is not generally known that the similar chandelier shown at St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall, is a replica of that at the Temple, cast in 1788. The grilles or screens of seventeenth-century ironwork on either side of the chancel also deserve careful examination. In the Weavers' Chapel is the Corinthian reredos, toward which Colston gave £60, beautifully carved, if incongruous. The paintings which adorn it were by one Boucher, the possessor of a name well known in Bristol, and were restored by John Milton, who, according to local tradition, was a descendant of the poet. There are also some good brasses, one in the Weavers' Chapel with an inscription in Leonine verse, and much valuable altar-plate.

Near at hand in St. Thomas's Street, a few yards

from the bridge, is the church of St. Thomas the Martyr, one of the few bearing that dedication, by which is meant not the martyred apostle, but the murdered archbishop. St. Thomas, like St. Mary Redcliffe, was until recently a chapel to the parish church of Bedminster. The original church was rebuilt, with the exception of its fine tower, which still stands, in 1790. The old building is said by Barrett, who wrote before its destruction, to have ranked next to Redcliffe Church in size and elegance. The present building is externally uninteresting, but within it is a really fine example of the English Renaissance art of the school of Wren, with harmonious furniture and decorations. The woodwork is earlier than the building it adorns, the altar-piece dating from 1710, and the very fine organ-case and gallery from 1732; the seats are a few years later. The strong-room within the tower is perhaps the nearest approach in this country to the continental treasury: it contains not only the valuable Georgian altar-plate, but numerous deeds of the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, with seals, an illuminated folio manuscript Vulgate, and, greatest treasure of all, two pairs of Romanesque candlesticks, of *champlevé* enamel on copper, of twelfth or thirteenth century date, and of German type and probable workmanship, though their provenance is not known.

In addition to the churches there were many chapels now all destroyed: of these the most important were the Bridge Chapel, already alluded to, that of the Merchants' Guild in Broad Street, and

**Bristol**      that of St. Jordan, the companion of Augustine, in  
the precincts of the abbey.



**CANDELABRA AT THE TEMPLE**





CORN STREET

## CHAPTER X

### MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS



AS is the case with many other ancient boroughs, the history of the municipality of Bristol comprises, firstly, an account of a long struggle on the part of the commonalty to obtain for themselves freedom from feudal restraints and burdens, and local self-government; and then, almost before the last was won, of its surrender, not without a strife and fluctuations of success and failure, into the hands of a narrow, self-elected oligarchy chosen from the

members of a few wealthy and influential families. Here, as elsewhere, the fellowship of merchants, or Merchant Guild, seems to have been the institu-

**Bristol** tion which gradually developed into the corporate body and superseded the Commonalty, or assembly of the whole body of burgesses, in the government of their town. The first definite mention of this Guild occurs in the year 1286-87, when its two seneschals witnessed a document still preserved at All Saints' Church, and it is noteworthy that the mayor's two chief officers were long designated seneschals, before they received the more usual appellation of bailiffs or sheriffs. The Guild had then, probably, been in existence for many years, as the charter granted by King John while Earl of Mortain, in 1188, expressly provided that 'they may have all their reasonable guilds as well or better than they had them in the time of Robert and his son William, Earls of Gloucester.' The first mention of a mayor is found in a copy of a deed, whose original is lost, where Robert Fitz-Nichol signs as Mayor of Bristol in the year 1201; but it was in the year 1216 that the royal officer, the *prepositus* or provost, yielded place to the communal mayor, Adam le Page, the first of an uninterrupted succession. A town council in the modern sense of the word, a definite and permanent body of men with fixed rights and duties, was first provided for by the great charter of Edward III., in 1373, which empowered the mayor and sheriff and their successors, *by the assent of the Commonalty of the said Town of Bristol, the Suburbs, and Precincts thereof*, to elect forty of the better and more honest men of the Town, Suburbs, and Precincts thereof, with power to make bye-laws and levy taxes. This,

however, was only an official recognition, a defining and legalising, of a practice which had already crept into use; for we read that in 1345 the mayor, Stephen le Spicer, had called to his assistance forty-eight of the more powerful and principal citizens, who agreed on many useful laws and ordinances, which were confirmed by charter, and we have seen that even further back, in and previous to the year 1312, the whole government of the town was in the hands of a self-appointed council of fourteen. The clause safeguarding the right of the commonalty in the selection of the council was repeated in the charter of Henry VII., but it had become a dead letter, and it disappeared from all future documents. Once formed, the council underwent little alteration in its size or constitution. Henry VII. ordered the creation of six aldermen, one the recorder *ex officio*, the other five to be elected by the mayor and Common Council, who were to have the same authority and power as the aldermen of the City of London, and to be Justices of the Peace as well by land as by water. He also altered the method of election of the Common Council, which was in future chosen by the mayor and two aldermen nominated by him. The number of aldermen was increased in the next reign to twelve. The two charters of the Tudor Henrys did not make it clear whether the aldermen were to form part of the forty members of the Common Council, or were to be in addition to them: the Bristol corporation acted on the latter supposition, and this formed the flimsy pretext for the demand of Charles II. for the surrender of the charter. The number of



**Bristol** members remained at forty-three, including mayor, sheriff, and recorder, and the body continued to be a close corporation, filling up its own vacancies, till the passing of the Municipal Corporations Reform Act of 1835, when for the first time in its history it became fully representative of the whole body of citizens. It is a matter of local interest that the useful reform was an indirect consequence of the Bristol riots of 1831, in that it rose out of the report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the state of the municipal corporations in England—a Commission which was appointed as a result of ‘the scenes of violence and outrage which have occurred in the city of Bristol and some other places.’

The mayor in the Middle Ages exercised a very paternal government, and was invested with wide powers, extending from the administration of justice to fixing the price of bread. In Bristol he was in right of his office the Master of the Merchants’ Guild and Mayor of the Staple, and as the King’s Escheator he enjoyed the rare privilege of having the sword of state carried before him. To the functions of a modern corporation little attention seems to have been paid. The streets appear to have been first paved in the year 1587, and in the same year the first effort was made to cope with the frequently recurring fires, when it was ordained that every member of the Common Council should keep six leather buckets in readiness in case of fire. It is true that there was a plentiful supply of pure water, but this was owing to the philanthropy and public spirit of the monastic

bodies. There were common taps at St. John's conduit beneath St. John's Church; the Key pipe near the Frome; All-Hallows' pipe, the gift of St. James's Priory to the church of that name; St. Nicholas's pipe, near St. Nicholas's Church; three pipes in the Redcliffe district, and the Temple conduit. Most of these were adorned with elegant basins and canopies of stone, known as Castalets, and the water was conveyed to them from the surrounding hills by conduits made from the hollowed trunks of trees; sections of these pipes are still occasionally uncovered in excavating. The situation of the Temple conduit was afterwards marked by the fine leaden statue of Neptune, which may still be seen where the modern Victoria Street crosses the line of the more ancient Temple Street. A local tradition says that this statue was cast from cannon taken from the Spanish Armada.

On the other hand, the Council took a prominent part in the social life, the pageantry and amusements of the community—a part which was rigidly prescribed for them, even to the Christmas drinking of the officials. They did something, too, for the adornment of the town; for to celebrate the acquiring the charter of Edward III., they erected a very graceful and beautiful cross at the four cross-roads at its centre. This cross was afterwards not unjustifiably removed from the narrow street, and re-erected in College Green, where, however, it did not long remain, for in 1768 it was given by the then dean to Sir Henry Hoare, in whose grounds at Stourhead, Wilts, it may still be seen. A replica of the original

Bristol was afterwards erected in College Green. (No. 1 on plan.)

The corporation early found the advantage of having a friend at court: Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was made Recorder in 1533; and Seymour, afterwards the Protector Somerset, became High Steward in 1540. He was succeeded in the office by a long line of distinguished men, which included the Earls of Pembroke, Leicester, Burleigh, and Essex, Lord Hunsdon, and a greater Cromwell and greater Protector; the office afterwards became hereditary in the ducal family of Beaufort. They were fee'd by gifts of wine, sugar-loaves, and fine rugs, and less frequently by money gifts, and were occasionally of some service to the town by obtaining for its representatives access to the royal ear.

The meeting-place of the Town Council was the hall of the Merchants' Guild in Broad Street, on the site of the present Guildhall, which, though rebuilt, still contains some relics of the old building, but for the better transaction of public business a Council-house was erected in Corn Street in 1552; it has since been twice rebuilt. The present building is a cold-looking, if correct, classical edifice, designed by Smirke; it contains some interesting portraits, notably Charles I. by Jansen, James II. by Kneller, Lord Clare by Gainsborough, and especially the Earl of Pembroke by Vandyke, and Edmund Burke by Sir Joshua Reynolds: the two last are very fine examples. It contains too a very interesting collection of corporation plate and insignia, probably second only to

those of London. The four swords of state are especially notable; the earliest, known as the 'mourning sword,' dates from the fourteenth century. One of the earliest, as well as the most beautiful, pieces of plate is a rose-water ewer with salver, bequeathed by Alderman Robert Kitchin in 1573. The salver was stolen during the Reform Riots, and cut up into 169 fragments, which were fortunately recovered and cleverly repaired. The thief was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation, and on his return he called at the Council-house, introduced himself, and asked to see the salver.

Muni-  
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The real centre, however, of civic life was the Tolzey. This was a low colonnade built below the north windows of All Saints' Church, not far from the High Cross, covering in the pavement of the narrow street, and affording some protection from the weather. Originally, as its name implies, intended as a toll-house, it soon became also the seat of a court of summary jurisdiction; the court called the Tolzey was certainly in existence before the year 1373. With its two pipes or conduits sheltered from the wet it was probably the favourite morning meeting-place of the goodwives of the town, and under its protecting roof most of the mercantile business was transacted, so that in later years it served the purpose of an Exchange. With the growth of the city the crowd of merchants stretched beyond its narrow bounds, and the Town Council built a second similar colonnade on the opposite side of the street in front of the Council-house, and yet another

Bristol      beneath Christ's Church. It was beneath one of these that, for the convenience of business men, various benefactors in the days of Elizabeth and James I. placed those curious and handsome pillars or tables of brass, which still adorn the pavement in front of the Exchange hard by. It is generally believed that their business purpose, together with a certain rude resemblance these tables have to a row of nails balanced on their points, first gave rise to the expression 'to pay on the nail.' At length the nuisance of a crowd of business men thronging streets which were even narrower then than now, induced the corporation to consider the question of providing an Exchange, and in 1740-43 they erected, from the designs of the celebrated John Wood, of Bath, the stately, elegant, and harmonious building which is still one of the chief architectural ornaments of the city, and one of the best examples of Wood's refined and thoughtful work. The architect, in his published description of the building, has left on record a very full account of the ceremony of its opening, which is too long to quote here, but which shows that the love of pageantry, and the power to organise it, were by no means lost in Bristol in the eighteenth century. A procession three-quarters of a mile in length, marched to an accompaniment of bands of music, with ringing of bells and continuous firing of cannon, from the Guildhall to the Exchange, where the usual speeches were made, and the day ended with the usual feasting, and, needless to say, much drinking. There was wine at the Council-house, and a great dinner at

the Merchants' Hall, and the mayor provided wine for the members of the various city companies at their respective halls. Thirty pounds were given to the workmen engaged on the building to drink to its prosperity; and still more thoughtfully, all the debtors in the city prison were released, and provided with a sum of money to begin life afresh. In connection with the erection of the Exchange a new market was provided at its back, which further relieved the congestion of the streets where the markets had been previously held.

Municipal  
Institutions

About the same time that the Exchange was built the corporation provided a new home for their public library, which had been in existence since the year 1613. It is said to be the earliest municipal free library in England, preceding the very curious old Town Library at Leicester by about a dozen years. Its home in King Street, soon to be destroyed, is very interesting, retaining as it does all its original fittings. It contains a remarkable chimney-piece, which is said to be from the chisel of Grinling Gibbons: it was probably not executed till some years after the death of that artist.

Intimately connected with the corporation were the craft guilds, which, after the Reformation, developed into the city trading companies. 'Set on foot,' as Froude says, 'to realise that most necessary if not difficult condition of commercial excellence, under which man should deal faithfully with his brothers; and all wares offered for sale, of whatever kind, should honestly be what they pretended to be,'

**Bristol** these guilds were none the less jealous and close corporations, whose one, and generally successful, aim was rigidly to restrict trade to their own members, and to keep up prices by absolutely excluding the competition of foreigners, by which term they broadly meant all who were not free of the guild. Of these bodies there were in 1449 twenty-six in Bristol with halls of their own, in addition to smaller ones without fixed habitation. A curious ordinance of the mayor and Common Council in that year enumerates the larger guilds, and incidentally fixes their relative importance. It was ordered that on St. John's Night the mayor, and on St. Peter's the sheriff, should give wine to the craftsmen at their halls—namely, to the weavers, tuckers, and taylors, ten gallons; to the cornesors, eight; to the butchers, six; to the dyers, bakers, brewers, and shermen, each five gallons; to the skimmers, smiths, farriers, cuttelers, lockyers, barbers, waxmen, tanners, and whitawers, four; to the masons, tylers, carpenters, hoopers, wire-drawers, cardmakers, and bowyers, three each; and to the fletchers, two. 'Tucker' is the local term for fuller, and the shermen were also engaged in the finishing of cloth; the cornesors were corn-chandlers, and the fletchers arrow-makers. The number and size of the guilds connected with the cloth trade testifies to the importance of that industry in Bristol in the fifteenth century. In the year 1719, in consequence of constant disputes and bickering, the corporation drew up an order of precedence for the various companies; at that date just half of those

already enumerated had disappeared, but ten additional bodies had been formed, so that the lists numbered twenty-three. Noticeable among the new companies were the chyrurgians, who took the third place, and the tobacco-pipe makers.

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The earliest as well as the most powerful of the guilds was that of the Weavers, who possessed a chapel in the Temple Church in the thirteenth century; their hall in Temple Street was in existence as recently as 1869. Powerful as they were, the weavers as a corporation as well as in their individual capacity were under the jurisdiction of the Town Council, who framed ordinances for them, one of which prescribed that no machine was to be kept in an upper room or in a cottage, but in a shop in the street in sight of all. This rule was no doubt to prevent the substitution of inferior material. Another bye-law provided that no one should be admitted to the craft unless he was a burgess. These ordinances were entered into the 'Little Red Book' in 1344. Still more under the influence of the Town Council, as its good management was more essential to the well-being of the citizens, was the Bakers' Guild. This generally included about thirty craftsmen, had four masters, two elected annually, one of whose duties was to confer with the mayor at the Guildhall or Council-house soon after Michaelmas, when the harvest was completed, to fix the size and price of the loaf for the ensuing year. This custom, which was known as fixing the assize of bread, was continued till comparatively recent years. The mayor was further



Bristol empowered, whether upon complaint or not, to test the weight of the loaves, and to inflict severe penalties for short measure. Later on the bakers found these regulations irksome, and endeavoured to neglect them. The mayor's firmness led to a general strike in the trade, whereupon his worship sent messengers to the neighbouring towns and villages to say that the laws which excluded foreign bread were relaxed. This brought into the town a plentiful supply of bread at prices from twenty-five to thirty per cent. lower than that fixed by the mayor, thus not only defeating the monopolists, but also giving the citizens an object-lesson in the advantages and disadvantages of having a rigidly protected trade in their midst. The mayor undertook similar duties in respect to the Brewers' Guild, fixing annually the price of malt, and visiting at intervals, with his ale-conner, the houses of the common brewers—the mayor to see that the poor had good measure, and his officer to ascertain by taste that the quality was satisfactory. On its religious side the guild was connected with the Dominican Friars, in whose church, before the altar of St. Clement, they kept tapers burning 'to the honour and glory of God and Seynt our Blessed Mary, and Seynt Clement.' Later, after the dissolution of the monasteries, one of the halls of the old friary was granted to the company as a meeting-place, and though it was sold as long ago as 1697 it is still known as Bakers' Hall. Some of the early records of this guild still exist; they contain mention of frequent and heavy payments to minstrels. The



KING STREET WITH COOPERS' HALL

great festival of the society was on the feast of Corpus Christi, when the members marched in procession to the High Cross, and then returned to their hall to a modest meal of ale and bread. The sum paid on taking the freedom of the craft appears to have varied from 16d. to 40s., and provision was made for admitting strangers as temporary members. After the decay of the weaving industry the premier company was that of the Merchant Taylors, an

**Bristol** early foundation which lingered on till the nineteenth century, when its remaining property was assigned for the support of the picturesque almshouses in Merchant Street, which this company had founded long before. The quaint Merchant Taylors' Hall, with its great cavernous doorhead, adorned in its semi-dome with the arms of the company and sundry masks and arabesques in plaster-work, may still be seen in Taylors' Court, Broad Street. One other hall still survives; this is the handsome Corinthian edifice, rich with delicate carving, which the small Coopers' Company built for themselves in 1744 hard by the old theatre in King Street.

One old corporation demands fuller notice; not so much because it still exists, as on account of the unique position it has always occupied in Bristol history. This is the 'Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol,' which, though only constituted in its present form in the reign of Edward vi., may be considered the successor, though not directly, of the early Merchants' Guild. At some uncertain time after the last-named body had become merged in the governing body of the town, the merchants engaged in foreign trade seem to have felt the need of an organisation of their own, and at least as early as 1467 there was in existence a Fellowship or Fraternity of Merchants and Mariners of Bristol, having its meeting-place at Spycer's Hall, on the Welsh Back. Its earliest purpose was simply to maintain a priest and provide for twelve poor

mariners; but in the year named, Canynges being mayor, it came, like the craft guilds, under the control of the corporation, from whom it received a set of ordinances for its government. It was intrusted with the regulation of foreign trade, with power to fix prices and enforce them by penalties, and it soon was further charged with the duty of collecting the port dues and undertaking the care of the harbour and quays. Rapidly growing wealthy the fellowship purchased or built for themselves a hall, with a chapel dedicated to St. Clement, on or near the site of the present hall in King Street. In 1552 the members of the fellowship obtained a charter from Edward vi. incorporating them in a company under the title of the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol. The charter provided for the government of the company, and further ordained that no artificer or any other person should engage in commerce beyond seas unless he was admitted to the company or had served apprenticeship to one of its members. This vexatious restriction naturally aroused great ill-feeling among the smaller traders of the town who were not members of the company, and in 1571 the Town Council petitioned against it and obtained its repeal. Originally intended to be a trading company, or rather a ring or trust to obtain a local monopoly of foreign commerce, the society gradually developed into a public body, the power behind the city corporation which it completely dominated, and for a long period of years the real governing body of the city. It practically

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**Bristol** took charge of the whole control of the port, farmed the port dues and the charge for wharfage and crannage, kept the quays and the river banks in repair, and for a period of two hundred and fifty years undertook the duty of registering and supervising the pilots. Modern changes in methods of government have transferred these functions to the hands of other bodies, but the Merchants' Company has continued to carry on its useful work, as almoner not only of its own charities, but of many others which have been placed under its charge, and to exercise a princely hospitality at its old hall in King Street. That though a venerable and truly conservative institution it has been able to appreciate and assimilate modern ideas, may be judged from two of its more recent achievements. It secured the preservation to the public for ever of the five hundred acres of breezy upland known as the Clifton and Durdham Downs, and it fostered, and practically founded, the first great technical school in England.

Here we may conveniently deal with the later history of the port of Bristol. Its earlier career, a period of growth, vigour, and, though with occasional fluctuations, progress, has been already alluded to in the chapter treating the general history of the town. At the middle of the eighteenth century Bristol was still the second port in the kingdom, though its position was seriously threatened by Liverpool, and other rivals were drawing nearer. With a view of meeting this competition strenuous efforts were made by people interested in the success

of the port to induce the authorities to improve the navigation of the river, and to provide more and better accommodation for shipping, so that the larger vessels that were coming into use might ride safely independent of the tides. In consequence of the agitation Smeaton, the illustrious engineer who designed the Eddystone Lighthouse, was consulted, and he prepared a small scheme for widening and deepening the Frome, and by erecting double gates at its junction with the Avon, converting it into a floating harbour, at an estimated cost of £23,000. A year or two later the energetic and ingenious William Champion, whose name is well and honourably known in Bristol, propounded a more ambitious scheme. His plan, which was in the main finally adopted, was to erect lock gates across the Avon opposite to Clift House, some distance down the river, and so to convert the two rivers into a floating harbour. Neither plan, however, was adopted, and though the agitation continued, and various other suggestions were made, nothing was done for nearly forty years, when in 1802 a plan by Mr. Jessop was accepted after further inquiry. By this plan the waters of the Avon were conveyed through a new channel, the New Cut, from a point at Totterdown, above the town, to Clift House, some distance below it, and the whole of the existing rivers were held up by a dam and gates to form a great harbour, whose capacity was increased by the excavation of two basins—the small Bathurst Basin below the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, and the large basin

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**Bristol** called after the Duke of Cumberland, on the Avon at Hotwells, just within the great gates. To meet the cost of these works, which was estimated at £300,000 but actually reached just double that amount, a dock company was formed upon whose directorate the corporation and the Merchants' Company were represented, each nominating nine members to a board of twenty-seven. In return for this amount of public control a subsidy of £2400 was settled on the company, chargeable to the city rates. This great work, the first port improvement of any moment since the reign of Henry III., was commenced in 1804 and brought to a successful conclusion in 1809. It provided upwards of eighty acres of deep dock accommodation with a very large proportion of quay frontage, instead of the mud bottom which had served so long, but its construction was not followed by the hoped-for improvement of trade. This was partly owing to the fact that the improvement came too late, but chiefly to the enormous dues and charges imposed by the company, which had the effect of crippling the port even more thoroughly than the previous lack of accommodation had done. Roughly speaking, the charges were twice as high as those for similar goods at Liverpool; two and a half to one, and three to one respectively, as compared with London and Hull. The result is seen in the report of the Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations of 1833, that 'far below her former station as second port in the empire, she has now to sustain a mortifying competition with

second-rate ports in her own channel. Foreign produce now finds its way to Bristol in coasters from neighbouring ports; sometimes it is brought even from Liverpool and London. If it were not for the Irish trade and the West Indian monopoly, of which circumstances still enable Bristol to retain its share, it is probable that the floating harbour would soon open only for the reception of a few coasters and fishing vessels.' At last in 1848, when the export trade had totally disappeared and imports seemed likely to follow, the corporation took over the docks estate by an Act of Parliament, abolished the export dues, and reduced the local charges on ships coming into the port sixty per cent., and on goods thirty. At the same time they effected some improvement in the always difficult and dangerous navigation of the Avon. The effect of these tardy changes was immediate, and the growth of trade has been steady and continuous. The gradual increase in the size of ocean-going vessels pointed out that the true port of Bristol was at the mouth of the Avon, but the corporation unfortunately left the task of providing accommodation there to two private companies—the Bristol Port and Channel Dock Company at Avonmouth, and the Portishead Dock Company. The competitive trade and the divided control proved unsatisfactory from the first, and at the time of writing the Bristol corporation have taken over the entire responsibility, and are erecting at the mouth of the Avon fully equipped docks capable of receiving and handling vessels of

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**Bristol** the largest magnitude, with every prospect of recovering at least a fair share of their lost commerce.

Even in the darkest days the spirit of adventure had not deserted Bristol men, and in 1837 the first ocean-going steamship, the *Great Western*, was successfully built and launched in the Avon. This was a wooden ship of 1340 tons, with engines of 440 horsepower. In spite of gloomy prognostications, she was successful from the first, and was accustomed to make the American voyage in an average of fourteen days, with a very low consumption of coal. Compared with present-day liners she was an insignificant boat, but as the pioneer in a great revolution she should not go unrecorded. Inspired by the success of the *Great Western*, her owners proceeded to build a larger vessel, the *Great Britain*, memorable as the first iron-built steamship. On account of the heavy charges at Bristol, the *Great Britain* sailed from the first from the Mersey, and for the same reason the earlier steamer was soon afterwards removed to the port of Liverpool.

Perhaps the Bristol monument which attracts the greatest and most widespread attention is the graceful suspension bridge which spans the gorge of the Avon at St. Vincent's Rocks. As far back as the middle of the eighteenth century the desirability of a bridge over the gorge had occurred to a Bristol alderman named Vick, and, dying in 1753, he left by will the sum of £1000 to the Merchant Venturers' Society for the purpose of building a toll-free bridge over the Avon from Clifton Down. He had come to the con-

clusion that £10,000 would accomplish his purpose, and he left directions that his bequest should be put out at interest until that sum had accumulated. When, in 1830, the fund had reached £8000, it was felt that the time had come to carry out the scheme, and as the bequest was wholly inadequate, some £50,000 or £60,000 being found to be necessary, an Act of Parliament was obtained, the clause which forbade tolls was set aside, and a company formed to carry out the work. Designs were submitted by several eminent bridge engineers, including Telford and Rendel, and the beautiful plan of Brunel, ultimately carried out, was selected. In 1831 the work was commenced, but the estimate proved utterly inadequate, progress was slow, and in 1853 the idea was practically abandoned, and the chains and other ironwork were sold and employed in the construction of the old Hungerford Bridge across the Thames at London. At length, in 1861, the project was resumed; a new company was formed to take over the work, and under the superintendence of Messrs. Hawkshaw and Barlow the bridge was at last finished in 1864, a hundred and eleven years after the alderman had made his bequest. The chains used, curiously enough, were the original ones, repurchased when, opportunely, the Hungerford Bridge was removed. The total cost was just ten times as much as its sanguine projector's original estimate. The total span is 702 feet, and the space between the abutments 627 feet, while the height at the centre is 245 feet above high-water. The chains are carried

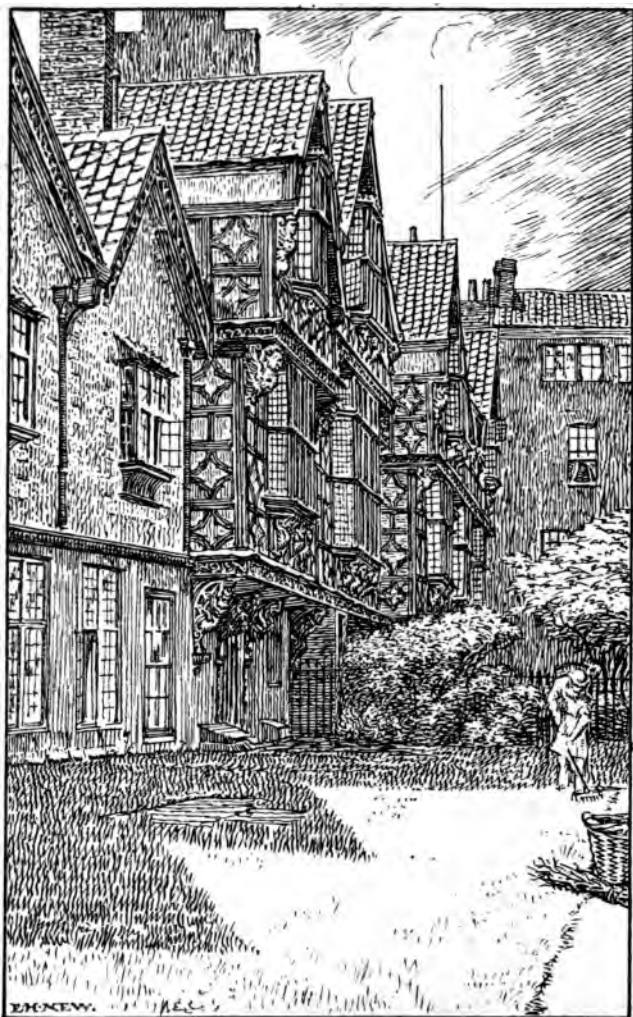
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**Bristol** through two towers, one on each side the river, 86 feet in height, and are securely bolted into the solid rock. Its weight is 1500 tons, and it is believed to be the strongest, as well as the handsomest, suspension bridge ever built.



**THE CITY CREST**





ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL

## CHAPTER XI

### CUSTOMS AND AMUSEMENTS—STREETS, HOUSES, AND CHARITIES



THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS

IF the mediæval citizens of Bristol led strenuous lives, they none the less found plenty of time for amusements and feasting. It is estimated that the festivals of the Church meant at least one holiday a week on an average, and these were scrupulously observed, the clergy, the civic authorities, the guilds, and the townsfolk all bearing their part. Perhaps the great day of the year was the feast of Corpus Christi, when the season of the year made an open-air festival possible. On that day all the guilds joined in the celebration with their banners and pageants; there was an ecclesiastical procession through the streets to the High Cross, followed by miracle-plays, and feasting

Bristol in the halls. The dark days before Christmas were brightened by the feast of St. Nicholas, always a popular holiday at a seaport town. In Bristol the curious custom of the festival of the 'Boy Bishop' was observed, and the Town Council took a prominent part. Their part was prescribed by an ordinance quoted in Ricart's *Calendar*, which is interesting as showing how these old customs tended to crystallise. Modernising the spelling, it reads: 'That on St. Nicholas' Day all join in the festival of the Boy Bishop. . . . On St. Nicholas Eve the Mayor, Sheriff, and their brethren to walk to St. Nicholas Church, there to hear their Evensong; and on the morrow to hear their mass, and offer, and to hear the Bishop's sermon and to have his blessing; and after dinner the said Mayor and Sheriff and their brethren to assemble at the Mayor's counter, there waiting the Bishop's coming, playing the meanwhile at dice, the town clerk to find them dice and to have one penny of every raffle (raphile); and when the Bishop is come thither, his chapel there to sing, and the Bishop to give them his blessing, and then he and all his chapel to be served there with bread and wine. And so depart the Mayor, Sheriff, and their brethren to hear the Bishop's Evensong at St. Nicholas Church aforesaid.'

The Christmas celebrations extended from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night, and were no doubt attended with much eating and drinking, occasionally ending in quarrels and bloodshed. To secure better order at this time, and quiet streets, it was decided, in 1481, that for the better governance of the town

during the holidays the mayor and sheriff should annually issue a proclamation on Christmas Eve that no manner of person, of whatever degree or condition, should at this Christmas go about mumming with masked faces, or should go after the ringing of the curfew at St. Nicholas unless he carried a torch, lantern, candle, or sconce, and that no one should carry a weapon whereby the king's peace might be broken or hurt, on pain of fine and imprisonment. It must be confessed that at almost all periods in the past a too great devotion to the bottle has been a failing of the Bristol men in their holiday mood; this was perhaps owing to the nature of its early trade, and it is only fair to say that the city has also been distinguished by its fine taste in wine. There seems to have been some attempt to regulate, if not to limit, the drinking habits in high quarters; for the useful Ricart, who let few matters of interest connected with the corporation escape him, records under the year 1472 that the Common Council fixed that the mayor's Christmas drinking should take place on St. Stephen's Day, the sheriff's on St. John's Day, that of the senior bailiff on Innocents' Day, and the junior bailiff's on New Year's Day; and that on Twelfth Day they should go to the Christmas drinking of the abbot of St. Augustine, as of old custom, if it should be prayed by the abbot and convent. There is reason to believe that the potations within the cloister walls were not less deep than those at the Guildhall. Two very important civic functions occurred on the setting of the watch on St. John's

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**Bristol** and St. Peter's Nights. It was then that the mayor and the sheriff respectively sent a hundred and twenty-three gallons of wine to be consumed by the members of the craft guilds in their halls.

In addition to the general holidays each guild had its own high day. That of the Weavers was on St. Catherine's Eve, when the mayor and corporation were entertained at a banquet at the hall, followed by a performance by the St. Catherine's players, who were afterwards suitably rewarded. In conjunction with the Cordwainers the Weavers used also to make an annual procession to the chapel of St. Anne at Brislington, where they offered candles. Another excuse for leaving work was to attend *obit* services, of which at least twenty were endowed: such was Halleways, at All Saints' Church, when the mayor received 6s., each sheriff 3s. 4d., the town-clerk 1s., the sword-bearer 4d., the four sergeants each 3d., and six hundred townsmen a silver penny apiece, for attending the service.

Out-door sports were generally cruel and brutal in Bristol, though not more so than in other parts of the country. The most popular were cock-fighting and bull-baiting, which took place in Broad Mead, a pleasant public meadow on the north bank of the Frome; and the town records mention frequent payments to bear-wards. A local custom was that of 'squailing' cocks on Shrove Tuesday. This was even more cruel, as it was undoubtedly less interesting and exciting, than cock-fighting. It was a sort of living 'Aunt Sally,' in which a cock, tethered by the leg, was

killed by throwing or shying sticks at it, as at cocoa-nuts in more degenerate times. In 1606 the mayor, whether from motives of humanity or from a Puritan hatred of sport, forbade this cruel amusement; and the wild apprentices showed at once their respect for the letter of the law and their contempt for their chief magistrate, by squailing a goose on his worship's door-step. More laudable was the military training which was part of the necessary education of every citizen in days when there was no standing army. William Worcester mentions that the Riding Fields, where jousts were held, were situated on the high ground above Kingsdown, to the north of the town, and the humbler townsmen who did not ride had their archery butts and, later, musket practice. In 1613 there were shooting matches, out and home, with Exeter. The Bristol men lost at Exeter, for a reason which is said in more modern times to have led to the downfall of English cricket teams in the Antipodes, namely, that on their arrival the previous night 'there was supper and many healths, and when they brought our men home to their lodgings there were many more healths, and burnt sack all night, so that our men were sick with drinking and watching.' The Bristol men profited by the experience, and in the return match won all three rounds. The rifle butts at that time were situated in the Marsh.

With the Reformation the religious pageantry ceased, but the void left was soon filled by the sudden rise of the English drama, which was nowhere more speedily and heartily welcomed than at Bristol.

Bristol    Secular plays, such as they were, had long been acted in booths at St. James's Fair, and we have already seen that one guild at least, that of the Weavers, possessed its own players, possibly such a company of amateur actors as that not unkindly caricatured by Shakespeare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—it will be remembered that Bottom himself was a weaver; but under the later Tudor sovereigns the provincial towns were perhaps better provided with good acting than at any time before or since, and the idea of a municipal theatre more nearly realised. It was the custom of the various companies of players to leave London during the off-season and go on tour, and many municipal corporations were in the habit of giving them a subsidy, which sometimes took the form of a guarantee. The payments made by the Bristol corporation to the actors were not so large as those of some smaller towns, probably because they obtained better support from the prosperous Bristolians. The record of such a visit here occurs in 1532, when the corporation paid to Lord Lisle's players 10s., and to the Duke of Richmond's 6s. 6d. After this there is a gap of several years, until 1557, when the visits were resumed. In that year the king's and queen's players received 15s., and Lord Oxford's 10s. From this time the entries occur frequently till the end of the century, when they cease. In October 1577 the records have an entry, 'paid my Lord of Leicester's players, and for links to give light in the evening—the play was called *Myngo*—£1, 2s.' This is one of the few occasions

on which the name of the play was mentioned. The next year, 1578, was a memorable one in the theatrical annals of Bristol, for it was visited by no fewer than six companies of actors—Lord Berkeley's, Mr. C. Howard's, the Earl of Suffolk's, the Earl of Bath's, the Earl of Derby's, and the Lord Chamberlain's. The titles of two of the plays performed are given; they are, *What Mischief Waiteth for the Hand of Man*, and *The Court of Comfort*. The names of the actors are unfortunately not recorded. The Lord Chamberlain's company visited Bristol more than once during the time that Shakespeare was one of its members, so that it is quite possible that the great dramatist himself played here.

At first plays were acted at the Guildhall, but at an early date a permanent building was erected for the drama in Wine Street. This was soon succeeded by the Tucker Street Theatre, which lasted to the year 1704, when it was turned into a chapel. In that year the Puritans who were in ascendancy on the city magistracy forbade the acting of stage-plays in Bristol, and though it was occasionally contravened, the enactment remained in force until 1764, when the historic house in King Street was built. Fortunately for the playgoing citizens the county magistrates did not entertain such strong views about the immorality of the stage, and about the year 1726 the well-known actor Hippiisley opened a theatre at Jacob's Wells, just outside the city boundary. The play commenced at 6.30 P.M., and during the winter months the management provided men with lights along the

**Bristol** narrow and awkward approach to the city. The prices of admission ranged from one shilling to three. The difficulty of access to the Jacob's Wells Theatre militated against its success, and at length a company was formed in 1764 who secured a site in King Street, near Queen Square, then the fashionable quarter, and two years later was opened the well-known Theatre Royal, which still exists, and is perhaps the oldest house in England where plays are performed. At the time of its erection it was considered one of the largest and most commodious theatres in Europe. Powell, the manager of the older house at Jacob's Wells, undertook the management, and it was opened with the comedy of *The Conscious Lovers*. Until it was superseded by a more modern building in a more fashionable quarter, most of the best actors in England at one time or another appeared upon its boards; and it is especially associated with the names of Mrs. Siddons, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kemble, and Macready, the last of whom was for several years its lessee, as his grandson still is of the younger Prince's Theatre. The quaint old front of the King Street building has only recently been removed, but the interior is an unchanged example of an eighteenth-century play-house.

The eighteenth century was characterised by a love of a stately social intercourse of which balls and assemblies were the favourite form, and in towns of a reasonable size, where every one knew every one, a very satisfactory and enjoyable form. The Assembly

Room, which was erected in 1756, is in Prince Street, but it has for many years ceased to be a place of amusement, and is now a railway goods depot, and doomed to early destruction. It is externally a fine and stately Palladian building, which still forlornly bears aloft the motto, 'Curas Cithara Tollit,' and within has a noble ballroom, richly adorned with plaster-work, with drawing-room and coffee-room. The subscribers used to meet for dancing once a fortnight through the winter, and the balls began at half-past six and ended soberly on the stroke of eleven. Minuets were danced till eight o'clock, and after that country dances, and the subscribers who did not dance found sufficient amusement at cards in the drawing-room. At the end of the season the surplus funds provided a cotillion ball. The subscription was two guineas, and every winter a series of concerts was held at the same subscription. In the summer season similar assemblies were held at the Hot-Wells, then thronged with seekers after pleasure or health, but these were confined to the visitors and not patronised by the townsfolk. Among those visitors Squire Bramble and his interesting household have done more for the fame of the place than any of the less real creatures of history.

As manners softened with the lapse of time the brutal bull-baiting and cock-fighting gave place to gentler forms of out-door amusement. Until Queen Square was built the favourite pastime of the elder citizens on summer evenings was to walk in the grove of trees which had been planted on the Town Marsh,

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Bristol whose memory is preserved in the name, the Grove, given to the adjacent portion of the floating harbour. Of out-door games, bowls was the favourite. In Roque's map of 1741, as it is engraved in Barrett's history about forty years later, two bowling-greens are shown, one in the Pithay, and a larger one near St. James's Church. When in process of time these were built over, it became the custom to walk out to the gardens and greens attached to the suburban taverns. Of these the most famous was the 'Ostrich,' on Durdham Downs, where Down House now stands, which was for many years a popular and fashionable resort.

The latter half of the eighteenth century witnessed a marked literary awakening in Bristol. This was largely due to Chatterton and Southey, both of whom were born and spent their earlier life here; but still more, perhaps, to the two brothers, Joseph and Amos Cottle, who were poor poets enough, but generous and far-seeing publishers. From their shop, at the corner of High Street and Corn Street, were issued in rapid succession the *Poems of Bion and Moschus*, that is to say, Southey and Lovel; Southey's *Joan of Arc*, Coleridge's *Poems on Various Subjects*, and especially the famous *Lyrical Ballads* by Coleridge and Wordsworth. In 1794 Coleridge was lodging with Southey at No. 48 College Green, planning out their pantisocratic Utopia 'on the principles of an abolition of individual property.' Coleridge lectured not unfrequently at the Literary Institution in later years. Contemporary with these writers Hannah More, who

at that time assisted her sisters in the care of their school in Park Street, was engaged in the production of her numerous volumes, and Barrett and Seyer were at work upon their histories. In 1773 was founded the Bristol Library Society, which accumulated a very noteworthy library, which is now the property of the town. Chatterton was dead before it opened, but all the other writers who have been mentioned were subscribers, with many others since known to fame. One of its choicest treasures is a witty autograph letter from Coleridge, chaffing the librarian about some point of management.

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The less cultured portion of the community took their chief holiday at St. James's Fair. Founded in the thirteenth century, if not earlier, this institution was one of the greatest business gatherings in the kingdom, and was attended by merchants from all parts of the country and from the Continent. During its continuance practically no business was done within the walls, and all the citizens thronged to the open place below St. James's Monastery, where the fair was held; in the day to buy and sell, in the evening to witness the dramatic and other shows. As late as the seventeenth century the fair was an object of interest to Turkish pirates, who used to await the foreign merchantmen at the entrance to the Bristol Channel. With the decay of the local cloth trade and the rise of more convenient modes of business, the commercial importance of the fair ceased, and it degenerated into an annual carnival of dissipation, and was discontinued in 1837.



## Bristol

In the Middle Ages it was a very narrow line which divided amusements from punishments; it was as attractive to throw filth at a poor wretch in the pillory as sticks at a cock, and a political execution at the High Cross was even more exciting than bull-baiting. The most frequent crimes were offences against the code of trade regulations. These included the sale of goods by foreigners—that is to say, men who were not free of the guilds—and the practice known as ‘colouring’ commodities, by which was meant the putting a privileged merchant’s mark on the goods of strangers in order to evade the bye-laws; this was punished by fine and confiscation. Forestalling and regrating were severely punished, and bakers who sold short weight, and brewers who provided unwholesome beer, expiated their offence in the pillory. In later years the prison of Newgate was crowded with insolvent debtors, one of whom was the unfortunate Richard Savage. Of more serious crimes, robbery and violence were the chief; murder was by no means unknown, and the Downs outside the town were notorious for highway robbery.

The pillory or winch stood in, and gave its name to, Wine Street, originally Wynch Street. The town gaol was from the time of Edward III. in Newgate, which had been used as a prison at a much earlier date. It was several times visited by Howard, the philanthropist, who found it clean but close and offensive, and much overcrowded; most of its rooms were less than 8 feet in height, the female ward only 6 feet 6 inches. The food provided for prisoners

was one threepenny loaf a day, but there was an alms-box placed outside for the benefit of poor prisoners, and compassionate townsmen used to provide food and clothing. The gallows on the top of Cotham Hill, outside the town, were in frequent requisition, and close by, where Highbury Chapel now stands, was the place where heretics were burnt. Another form of punishment which Bristol possessed, like so many old towns, was the cucking-stool, or ducking chair, which was reserved for female scolds and other disturbers of the peace. This was a chair fixed to a beam poised over the castle mill-pond on the Frome; its victim was generally dipped three times, and it is said to have been in use as recently as 1718.

Customs  
and  
Amuse-  
ments

The Council attempted not only to punish crime and regulate manners, but to restrain vice. Until the year 1530 the number of taverns was strictly limited to six. In that year, on account of the increase of population, six additional were allowed; while an early regulation recorded in the Little Red Book provided that no common woman might stay within the town, nor should ever appear in the streets or even within the Barres (an extra-mural district where they chiefly resorted), without the head covered. A later regulation compelled such persons to wear striped hoods and dresses turned inside out.

It is now time to glance at the houses in which the citizens lived, especially those which still remain. Until quite recently, Bristol possessed a singular wealth of high-gabled half-timber houses and picturesque streets, and resembled the quaint old-world

## Bristol



MARY-LE-PORT STREET

towns of northern Germany or Normandy rather than a prosaic English commercial town. It consisted of a central portion of houses of the earlier part of the seventeenth century, with here and there among

them a house of earlier date, surrounded by a zone of streets and squares built in the English vernacular architecture of the eighteenth century, solid and comfortable-looking houses of brick with a quiet dignity and character of their own. During the last few years the buildings of the former class have been swept away by the score, whole streets of them at a time, and now those of the later date are succumbing to the march of modern improvement. Still a few of the old façades adorn the streets, and in far more instances an unpretending or commonplace modern front conceals handsome panelled rooms, adorned with rich old plaster ceilings and mantel-pieces of singular beauty.

Streets,  
Houses,  
and  
Charities

In addition to the ordinary houses several of the wealthy families possessed large mansions, or 'great houses' as they were called, of almost palatial magnificence. Of at least three of those erected during the Middle Ages some portion remains. They resembled in planning and scale the great country houses of the same dates. The most important and interesting is the building in Small Street, now the library of the Law Society, a unique example of a large town house of the Norman period.<sup>1</sup> Its chief feature is a great hall of transitional Norman character, divided like that of Oakham Castle into a central nave with side-aisles by piers and arcades of stone; the arches here are pointed, but their detail shows that they were erected soon after the year 1150. One aisle has been destroyed to widen

<sup>1</sup> Vignette, p. 27.

**Bristol** Small Street, but otherwise the old hall is practically unaltered. The house was enlarged in the fifteenth century by the addition of a fine range of Perpendicular buildings looking on to an internal court; they have particularly noble fireplaces and a magnificent range of windows. This building is often called Colston's House, from an erroneous idea that it was once the residence of the great philanthropist. The great house known as St. Peter's Hospital, overlooking St. Peter's Churchyard, built in the fifteenth century by the Norton family, and greatly enlarged by Robert Aldworth in 1612, has already been mentioned. It is said to have been the abode of Thomas Norton, the Bristol alchymist, who flourished about 1477, and who boasted that he had discovered not only the philosopher's stone but also the elixir of life. Of the house which William Canynges the younger built for himself during the height of his prosperity, between Redcliffe Street and the Avon, the hall with its richly moulded, high-pitched, open timber roof still remains at the back of No. 97 Redcliffe Street, though it was much injured by a fire which occurred in 1881; the lofty towered front toward the river has entirely disappeared.

After the reign of Henry VIII. the hall disappeared from the large town house, and its place, in Bristol, was taken by the large and handsomely decorated drawing-room or saloon on the first floor. The great house which Sir John Young built for himself on the site of the destroyed Carmelite Friary in St. Augustine's Back, the resting-place of so many royal

and distinguished visitors, has been destroyed, but the smaller house which he built in 1590 on the upper part of the same estate still exists. It is the house known as the Red Lodge, in Park Row, once the abode of James Cowles Prichard, the ethnologist, and now an Industrial School, and it may be viewed once a week. It contains a good staircase; and the drawing-room, which has often been engraved, is a particularly fine interior, with handsome chimney-piece and a curious internal porch.<sup>1</sup> Even more interesting than the Red Lodge is the house which John Langton (mayor in 1628) built for himself on the Welsh Back in 1614. In this house, which is not generally shown, a plain and unattractive exterior hides an interior which rivals the dwellings of the merchant princes of the Netherlands. It has a pleasing staircase and some minor rooms with panelling, but most of the wealth of adornment is lavished upon the drawing-room on the first floor, which possesses not only the most beautiful of the many chimney-pieces of early Renaissance date that are to be found in the city, but a door and pillared doorway, very richly carved and curiously inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl. Another fine interior a little later in date is that of the old town house of the well-known Bristol family of Elton, about to be destroyed at the time of writing to make way for an extension of the Post Office, in Small Street.

The houses of the more moderately wealthy merchants in mediæval times were closely built in rows;

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Houses,  
and  
Charities

<sup>1</sup> See illustration, p. 62.

**Bristol** they had each a very narrow street front but stretched a long way back. They were generally raised on crypts or vaulted cellars, and had a shop in front and a hall or living room behind; on the first floor were parlour, sleeping chamber, and kitchen, and above was a solar or attic. Strong party walls of masonry separated neighbouring houses, but the street fronts were of timber framing, the upper stories overhanging till they nearly met over the narrow streets, and the gables adorned with daintily carved barge-boards. The numerous houses built during the reign of James I. were generally similar, but they often rose to four and even five stories in height.

Of early examples the least changed is to be seen at the 'Swan' Inn, at the east end of Mary-le-Port Street, and there is another fifteenth or early sixteenth century house at the corner of Peter Street and Church Lane, noticeable for the moulded timbers which carry its boldly overhanging superstructure; several others have disappeared within living memory. Of the Jacobean houses the most conspicuous is the lofty and picturesque edifice at the corner of High Street and Wine Street, generally known as the Dutch House, from a tradition that its timber framing was constructed in Holland, and then brought over and set up in its present position; its detail, however, exhibits the peculiarities of most of the contemporary Bristol houses. Other excellent examples of the work of the period may be seen in the narrow defile of Mary-le-Port Street, in High Street, Temple Street, Frogmore Street, and especially in the



LLANDOGER TAVERN

picturesque King Street, which has several, the most striking being the Llandoger Tavern, a favourite resort of the sailors frequenting the port. There are other picturesque old inns in Thomas Street and West Street.

A feature of all mediæval seaport towns was the provision for storing goods beneath the houses.



## **Bristol**

Examples of these vaulted crypts may still be seen at London, Southampton, and Chester, but they seem to have been more numerous in Bristol than elsewhere, and a goodly number still remain, though for obvious reasons they are not accessible to the visitor. William Worcester attempted to make a list of those existing in his time, and he enumerated no less than 169. Some of these were solidly roofed with timber, and supported by massive oaken pillars on stone bases, but most were vaulted in stone; the earlier had simple barrel vaults, but the later possessed more elaborate intersecting vaults with groining ribs and vaulting shafts. They projected under the streets, and in consequence wheeled traffic was for long forbidden. When Pepys visited Bristol he noticed that there were no carts, save such as were drawn by dogs, for fear of shaking the vaults where the city's wealth was stored; and at a later date both Defoe and Pope mention that heavy goods were drawn on sledges.

In the year 1700 brick was first introduced as a building material, and at the same time a period of great building activity set in, so that in a very few years a new and well-built city completely hemmed in the older town. It seems as though the inhabitants having at last burst the narrow confines of the town walls could not soon enough build themselves houses outside, and rejoicing in their newly found air and space they laid out the new town on broad lines, with large straight streets and numerous open squares. The houses, though not ornate, derive

a certain architectural character from their grouping and their fair proportion, and individuality is given by varied and often charming door-heads, carved keystones, or other features. Internally they possess roomy halls and stately staircases, and many of the rooms possess good panelling or enriched cornices and ceilings. The best of these houses are in the squares, the largest and earliest of which, Queen Square, was begun in 1700 and finished in 1717. The whole of the north side and about half of the east were rebuilt after the disastrous fires on the occasion of the Reform Riots, but the rest of the square remains much as it left the builders' hands just two centuries ago. Next in date the small but pleasing St. James's Square was built between 1707 and 1716, and has been scarcely altered it is an early example of the symmetrical treatment of blocks of houses. The two finest of these houses now form the premises of the Young Men's Christian Association. A little later are King Square and Dowry Square and Parade, the last finished in 1744. The latest and most imposing of those squares is that called after the Duke of Portland, the then Lord High Steward, which was finished about 1790. Unlike the others its houses are built of stone. For a time the most fashionable quarter of Bristol, its glory has long departed, and it is now given over to offices and business premises. The little Orchard Street, on the site of the orchard of Gaunt's Hospital, is interesting as an almost untouched example of a town street of middle-class houses of the period of its erection,

Streets,  
Houses,  
and  
Charities

Bristol 1716; and close by, in the not unlovely if squalid Pipe Lane and Hanover Street, may be seen many of the dwellings provided for the humbler classes of citizens.

At about the time that the expansion of the town took place it became the fashion among the rich merchants to build themselves large detached mansions in the suburbs. A group of these may be seen on the summit of Clifton Hill, then for the first time coming into repute as a residential suburb; stately and substantial houses of freestone. One of them, Clifton Hill House, built in 1747, was long the dwelling of Dr. J. Addington Symonds and his more famous son. A finer example is the well-known Redland Court, rebuilt in 1730, an excellent specimen of an Italian villa adapted to English habits in the eighteenth century, admirable for state and ceremony, but without home comfort or convenience. It is now used as a High School for Girls. There is one belated town mansion of this date, or rather a front added to an earlier Jacobean house. This is No. 40 Prince Street, now the office of the sanitary authority, a gloomy but imposing stone-built edifice, remarkable for a profusion of the most delicately executed carving of flowers and foliage, in the manner of Grinling Gibbons, with which its fine drawing-rooms on the first floor are adorned.

In a busy mercantile community there are always some who fall by the way in the struggle, and the care of the aged and deserving poor has always been

a self-charged duty with their more fortunate brethren in Bristol. In the earliest days the ecclesiastical charities proved sufficient, the chief of them being that administered by the Prior and College of Gaunt's Hospital, which was primarily founded for the relief of the poor. Then with the development of the craft guilds each of these bodies looked after its own poor, thus advancing to a point in the direction of mutual help which our modern friendly societies and trades unions have scarcely reached. After the Reformation many of the city companies which superseded the guilds continued to maintain their own almshouses, but the help from the Church ceased. Its place was taken by private philanthropy, which soon led to the building and endowment of a large number of almshouses and other charities. This form of charity was not unknown long before this period, for as early as 1294 Simon Burton, who was mayor six times, and is favourably known on account of his work at the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, founded in Long Row an almshouse for sixteen poor women. This example was followed in or about 1402 by John Barstable and his wife, who built and endowed almshouses for twenty-two aged men and twenty-four poor widows in Old Market Street, outside the town. Another pre-Reformation foundation was that of John Foster, 1504, whose pretty little chapel, dedicated to the Three Kings of Cologne, has already been mentioned.

Most of these charities, however, were founded in

Streets,  
Houses,  
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Charities

## Bristol



MERCHANT TAYLORS' ALMSHOUSES

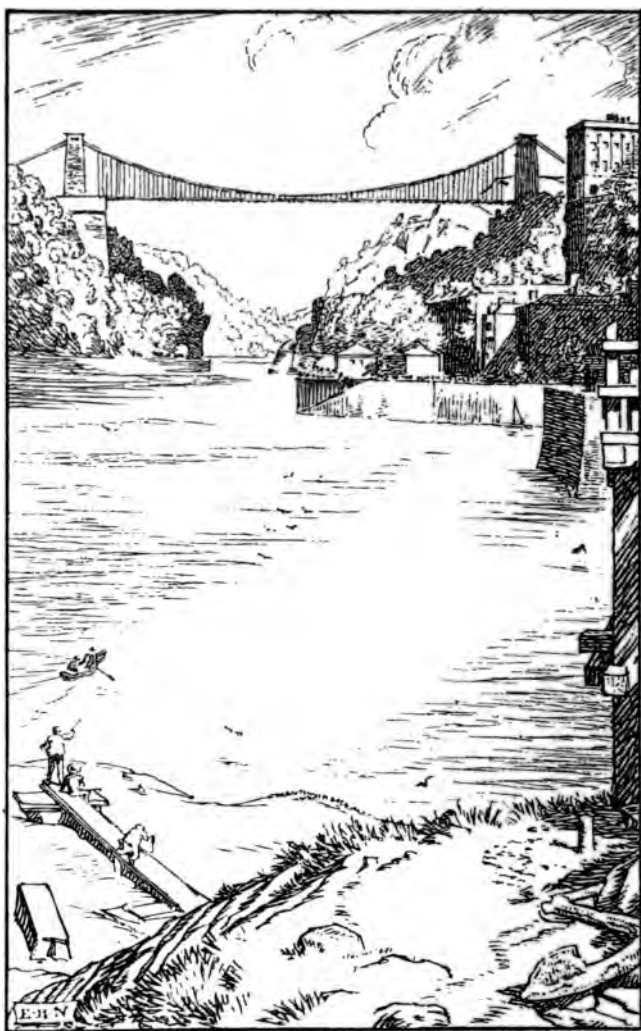
the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, at the end of which period not less than twenty-seven such institutions were in existence. Chief among these is Colston's Almshouse on St. Michael's Hill, built about 1695, an unpretending but wonderfully pleasing and satisfactory building, forming three sides of a quadrangle with a chapel in the centre. Others which deserve a visit are the Merchants' and St. Nicholas' Almhouses in King Street, the Merchant Taylors' in Merchant Street, the Presbyterian in Stokes' Croft, and the Friends' Poorhouse in New Street near the Frome. All these are homely and appropriate edifices with a certain old-world charm, and the last-named is a curious

survival of Elizabethan architecture in the very last  
year of the seventeenth century.

Streets,  
Houses,  
and  
Charities



MERCHANT TAYLORS' HALL



CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE

## CHAPTER XII

### SOME DISTINGUISHED NATIVES, RESIDENTS, AND VISITORS



ST. STEPHEN'S TOWER

**D**URING its long history Bristol has been the birthplace or the dwelling-place of at least its share of men who have risen to eminence in various walks of life. Some of these, among whom are the great Earl of Gloucester, William Canynges, William Worcester, and Sebastian Cabot, have received due attention in the preceding pages, but there are many others who have been passed over altogether, or to whom the barest allusion has been made, who deserve a fuller notice. This it is proposed to give them, as far as limitation of space will allow, in the present chapter.

First in point of date may be mentioned **RICHARD**



**Bristol**     **LAVENHAM**, who was born at the little Suffolk town from which he took his name early in the fourteenth century, and who died at Bristol in 1383. He was the head of the Carmelite Friary here, and Confessor to Archbishop Sudbury, a fellow East Anglian. He enjoyed a high reputation for scholastic learning, and was the author of some sixty-two or sixty-three treatises. Most of these were on questions of pure logic, but one dealt with the *Physics* of Aristotle, and one—*Contra Johannem Purveium*—was written in refutation of Wycliffe's chief disciple, whom we have already met with preaching in Bristol.

**JOHN MILVERTON**, a native of Milverton in Somerset, was also for a time an inmate of the Carmelite Friary. He afterwards became the head of the order in England, and was famous as a preacher. Accused of heresy he was summoned to Rome, and was three years a prisoner in the castle of St. Angelo. He lost by his absence the bishopric of St. David's, to which he had been nominated; but on his release he was offered by the Pope, Paul II., a Cardinal's Hat, which he refused. Milverton died in 1487.

**WILLIAM GROCYN**, the famous scholar, was a native of Colerne in Wiltshire, where he was born in 1446; but he appears to have received his early education in Bristol, though it is not known who were his instructors. After obtaining a fellowship at New College, Oxford, he studied in Italy and became perhaps the most famous Greek scholar of his age. Erasmus styled him 'patron and preceptor of us all.' Among his friends were More, Colet, Linacre,

Wareham, and Erasmus. He held some Church preferment, and remained a steady adherent of the old faith, though his mental temperament is manifest in a letter he wrote to Aldus the publisher, in which he congratulated him on publishing Aristotle before Plato, since the former was πολυμαθής, full of science, and the latter πολύμυθος, full of mysticism. He died in London in 1519.

Some distinguished Natives, Residents, and Visitors

ARCHBISHOP TOBIAS, or TOBY, MATTHEW was the son of a Bristol draper, and was born in one of the houses on the old bridge in 1546. At Oxford, where he was first at University College, and afterwards at Christ Church, he was respected, according to Wood, for his great learning, eloquence, sweet conversation, friendly disposition, and the sharpness of his wit. While at the university he had the good fortune to preach before Elizabeth and to win her favour, and he soon obtained preferment as Dean of Durham, and in 1606 became Archbishop of York. He was equally famous as a preacher and a statesman, and he showed his continued interest in his birthplace by a gift of books for its newly established library. Archbishop Matthew died in 1628, and was buried in York Minster.

WILLIAM CHILD (1606-1697), organist and composer of sacred music, was born in Bristol, and was a chorister at the cathedral. His mature life belongs rather to the general history of music, and to Windsor Castle, where he was for many years organist, and where he is buried.

ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM PENN, one of the great

Bristol

seamen of the Commonwealth, was born in the parish of St. Thomas in 1621. His father was a merchant and sea-captain, and under him he learned navigation. His name first appears in history in the year 1644, when he was appointed commander of the *Fellowship*, a vessel of twenty-eight guns. From that time his rise was rapid, and he was already an admiral in 1648, when he was appointed to the Irish fleet. He was sent on an expedition to the Azores and the Mediterranean in search of Prince Rupert, and for a whole year cruising about off the Straits of Gibraltar he maintained an effective blockade of the Mediterranean. He next took a prominent part in the Dutch war, and to him most of the credit belongs of its success, as his two superior officers, Blake and Monk, were neither of them seamen. In 1654 he was, like many other old Parliamentarians, dissatisfied with Cromwell's rule, and was in correspondence with Charles II., proposing to bring the fleet over to him. He did not, however, lose the Protector's confidence, and was sent in charge of the navy in the West Indian expedition which resulted in the capture of Jamaica. The army had first been landed in Hispaniola, but was foiled in an attack on San Domingo, and on approaching Jamaica Penn is said to have declared that he would not trust the army if he could come near with his ships. This he managed to do, and the whole credit of the successful issue belongs to him. On his return he was in the Tower for a short time on account of the earlier failure, but was soon

released. He was with Montagu (Lord Sandwich) on the *Naseby* when that vessel went to Scheveningen to bring over Charles II., and was then knighted. After the Restoration he was made a Commissioner of the Navy, in which capacity he drew up 'The Duke of York's Sailing and Fighting Directions.' He was partly responsible for the ill-success of the action off Lowestoft against the Dutch in 1670, and dying soon after, was buried with great state in the church of St. Mary Redcliffe. His name appears with great frequency in the pages of Pepys, who represents him as a pleasant companion, but a mean, incompetent, and self-seeking man. The diarist was a shrewd judge of character, but in this case, at least, his judgment seems to have been biased.

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The better-known WILLIAM PENN, son of the last-named, the Quaker founder of Pennsylvania, was connected with Bristol by his marriage with Hannah Callowhill, through whom he acquired a valuable property near the Dominican Friary. He lived for some time here, and his connection with the place is commemorated by the names of some of the streets on the property in question, Penn Street and Philadelphia Street.

EDWARD COLSTON (1636-1721) achieved for himself and his memory a unique place in the affection of Bristol, and no modern Englishman except John Kyrle, the Man of Ross, has so fully attained the honour of a popular canonisation. A High Churchman of the old school, and a Tory with at least a

**Bristol** tendency to Jacobitism, he entertained an equally bitter hatred for Catholics, Nonconformists, and Whigs, yet his memory is held in equal honour to-day by men of all denominations and all political parties. A member of a family which had settled at Bristol as early as 1345, Edward Colston was the eldest son of William Colston, a rich merchant who had commanded Colston's Fort for the king in 1645, and was afterwards removed from his office of alderman by Skippon. He was born in Temple Street, in a house now destroyed, and always took a special interest in the parish of his birth until the vicar, the Rev. Arthur Bedford, had the courage to offend him in 1713 by voting for Whig candidates for Parliament. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, and settled in London as a Spanish merchant, and for many years had little intercourse with his native city, residing chiefly until his death in a house at Mortlake. In 1683, however, he took up his freedom of the city and became a member of the Merchant Venturers' Society, and about the same time became the principal partner in the sugar refinery carried on at St. Peter's Hospital. It was about 1690 that he began to devote his time and his great fortune to works of charity. He gave liberally at Mortlake and in London, especially to the place of his education, but most of his liberality was devoted to his native city, to which he gave in all, in addition to his private charities, the then enormous sum of £66,570, his known benefactions elsewhere reaching £13,125. His first great work



COLSTON'S ALMSHOUSES

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in Bristol was the building and endowing the noble range of almshouses on St. Michael's Hill which bears his name, which he placed under the government of the Merchant Venturers' Society, and he soon afterwards endowed the Merchants' almshouses so as to provide for six additional inmates. Having thus provided for the aged and infirm, he next turned his attention to the education of the young. He began by founding a free school in Temple Street for clothing and teaching forty boys in the parish of his birth, and next in 1702 rebuilt the corporation school of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, and increased

**Bristol** its foundation. Meantime a much larger scheme was ripening in his mind, and in 1704 he offered to provide funds for increasing the number of boys on the foundation from forty-four to a hundred or a hundred and twenty. After consideration, the corporation refused this offer—from ignorance, it is generally said, and a belief that such charities proved only a nursery for beggary and sloth but Mr. Latimer has suggested, with some show of reason, that it may have been from a dread on the part of the council of Colston's extreme views. Whig principles were then in the ascendancy on that body, and some of its members were Dissenters, and it is certain that it was provided in the school that he afterwards founded, that no books should be used with 'any tincture of Whiggism,' and that no boy should be apprenticed to a Nonconformist; so that their fears, if indeed they existed, were not unjustified. The provision about apprenticeship was scrupulously carried out until quite recently. The negotiation with the corporation having fallen through, Colston set to work on his own account, and in 1708 he founded the institution, afterwards known as Colston's School, for a master, two ushers, and a catechist, and for one hundred boys to be instructed, clothed, maintained, and apprenticed, at a cost of £40,000. As a home for his school he purchased Sir Thomas Young's great house on St. Augustine's Back, and there, under the governance of the Merchant Venturers' Company, the school did a most useful work until, in the middle of the nineteenth century,

it was greatly enlarged and removed to the former bishop's palace at Stapleton, where under more modern conditions it fills an extended sphere of usefulness. In 1710 his fellow-citizens honoured themselves as well as Colston by electing him their representative in Parliament. He continued till extreme old age to take an active interest in his various foundations, and on his death in 1721 he was interred with great pomp, which was against his expressed wish, in the church of All Saints, where a lofty monument with recumbent effigy by Rysbrach marks his resting-place. Edward Colston never married; when his friends suggested marriage to him he used to say pleasantly, according to Barrett, 'every helpless widow is my wife, and her distressed orphans my children.' In spite of his vast charities, and the same authority says that those unacknowledged were at least as great as his public benefactions, he left a fortune of £100,000 to his relatives and dependants, and he had the rare satisfaction of seeing all his establishments at work, and of perceiving with his own eyes their good effects. Since his death the 13th of November, 'Colston's Day,' has always been kept as a public festival. The town flames with flags, and church-bells ring all day long: there are religious services in the morning, and in the evening the members of the four societies founded in his honour—the Colston, the Grateful, the Dolphin, and the Anchor—dine together, and vie with each other in collecting money to carry out works of practical benevolence in the spirit of their

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Bristol hero. Two of these societies are political, and the Anchor Society, representing every principle he held in abhorrence, is not behind the Dolphin, whose views are perhaps only a little nearer Colston's own, in its practical commemoration of his name and work. These dinners have long been treated as favourable opportunities for ministers and ex-ministers of State to address a wider audience than that of Bristol.

THOMAS CHATTERTON (1753-1770) has always, on account of his precocity, his misfortunes, and his early and tragic death, taken up a larger share of the pages of Bristol history than his merits strictly deserve. He was the posthumous son of the master of the Redcliffe Parish School, and was born in Pyle Street, Redcliffe. He received his early education at Colston's School, and was afterwards apprenticed to a lawyer named Lambert, practising in Corn Street, in a house now destroyed. From his earliest age he had been interested in antiquities, and as the nephew of the parish clerk of St. Mary Redcliffe he had unrestrained access to the muniment-room of that church, with its store of ancient documents. There he practised the imitation of ancient handwriting, and prepared himself for the celebrated Rowley forgeries. The monk Rowley, chaplain to William Canynge, he had invented at least as early as 1765, when he was less than fifteen years old; and about the same time he became acquainted with William Barrett, the surgeon, who was then collecting material for his history of Bristol. Chatterton seized the opportunity, and for

the next three years supplied him with documents. Was the historian interested in Burton or Canynges, the prolific monk was ready with a biography or a correspondence: was he writing on the castle, Rowley supplied a ground plan and elevation: did the leaning tower of the Temple or the entrance porch of St. Bartholomew attract his curiosity, manuscripts flowed in with a regularity which would have awakened the suspicion of a less gullible man. In 1768 he appealed to a wider audience, and in Felix Farley's *Journal* for October 1 in that year there appeared an account of the opening of the bridge by the mayor in 1248, also attributed to the monk. Emboldened by his success, he next flew at higher game, and as Horace Walpole was preparing his *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, Chatterton sent him, first, *The Ryse of Peyncteynge in Englande*, by T. Rowleie; and, a little later, *The Historie of Peyncters in Englande*, by T. Rowley. At the same time Chatterton left Bristol and went to London, hoping to make his way by his pen. His hope of assistance from Walpole was vain; for the latter, who had been at first deceived, discovered the imposture, but contented himself with giving his correspondent the unpalatable but not ill-meant advice to return to his work and amuse himself with literature when he had achieved a competence. Chatterton failed to obtain a hearing in London, and, too proud to return to Bristol, he perished, half-starved, by poison, in a garret in Brook Street, Holborn, before he had reached his eighteenth birthday.

SIR WILLIAM DRAPER, conqueror of Manilla and

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antagonist of 'Junius,' was born in Bristol in 1721, long resided at a house, Manilla Hall, which he built for himself at Clifton, and dying in 1787, was buried in the churchyard of St. Augustine the Less.

HANNAH MORE (1745-1833) was born at Stapleton, near Bristol, and spent most of her long life in or near that city. In early life she assisted her sister in keeping a boarding-school in Park Street; but she very soon developed a talent for literature, and a play, *The Search after Happiness*, brought her under the notice of Garrick. Under his encouragement she wrote several other plays, which were produced with a fair amount of success, and she obtained the friendship of Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds. She soon, however, gave up writing for the stage and devoted herself, first at Barleywood, near Wrington, and afterwards at Clifton, to the composition of religious and moral books, and to works of practical philanthropy.

MARY ROBINSON, better known as 'Perdita,' whose maiden name was Darby, was born at the Minster House in College Green, adjoining the Norman gateway, and was a not altogether creditable pupil of Hannah More and her sisters. A beautiful and precocious child, she made an unfortunate marriage at the age of fifteen, and soon afterwards went upon the stage, where she had a great success in Shakspearian characters. When playing Perdita in *A Winter's Tale* she had the misfortune to attract by her beauty the admiration of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., and she left the stage to become his soon discarded mistress. While still quite young she

became completely crippled by rheumatism, but made a brave and not unsuccessful effort to maintain herself by her pen. She was a regular contributor to the *Morning Post*, and published several volumes of novels and memoirs; she also wrote a considerable mass of verse, and was the Laura Maria of Della Cruscan fame, so savagely ridiculed by Gifford. Mrs. Robinson died in 1800.

Some  
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Natives,  
Residents,  
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Visitors

SIR NATHANIEL WRAXALL, administrator, traveller, and writer of numerous volumes of memoirs, was born in Bristol in 1751.

THE REV. ROBERT HALL (1764-1831), the greatest preacher of his day, was a native of Arnesby in Leicestershire, but he early became connected with Bristol as a student at the Baptist Theological College. After taking his degree he was for a short time a teacher at the college, and assistant to the minister of Broadmead Chapel. His great fame as a preacher was gained at Cambridge and in his native county, but late in life he returned to Bristol as President of the Theological College and Pastor of Broadmead Chapel, and dying here, he was interred in the Baptist Burial Ground, but his remains were afterwards transferred to Arno's Vale Cemetery, where a monument with a medallion portrait marks his resting-place.

ROBERT SOUTHEY Bristol's most famous son, was born at No. 9 Wine Street, where his father kept a linen-draper's shop. The house, which is marked by a commemorative tablet, is beneath the shadow of Christ Church, of which the elder Southey was warden.

**Bristol** He received his early education in or near Bristol, and at the age of fourteen was sent to Westminster. where, however, he did not stay long, as an article from his pen in the school journal, *The Flagellant*, on the subject of Corporal Punishment, led to his expulsion. He afterwards entered at Balliol College, Oxford, with a view of studying for the Church, but finding that he could not conscientiously take orders, he left the university without a degree. Then, after an aimless period spent partly in Bristol and partly in Lisbon, during which, with Lovell and Coleridge, he elaborated the scheme for communistic emigration which they termed 'Pantisocracy,' and published two small volumes of verse, he married Miss Edith Fricker, whose sisters wedded his two friends, and determined to devote himself to literature as a calling. In this, after much hardship, he was successful, and became Poet Laureate, and succeeded to the position once held by Dr. Johnson as the recognised representative man of letters in England. His subsequent career, however, belongs rather to the history of literature in England than to that of Bristol. He died in 1843.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, President of the Royal Academy, was born in Bristol in 1769. His father was the landlord of the 'White Lion,' in Broad Street, where the Grand Hotel now stands, but the great painter was born at No. 6 Redcross Street, a substantial stone-built house in what was then a respectable neighbourhood, though it has long ceased to be so. He was not long a resident of Bristol, for in 1772 his father removed to the 'Bear,'

at Devizes, where the young painter early became celebrated. Even more precocious than Chatterton, he was painting portraits at the age of five, and at twelve is said to have been the mainstay of his family. In his subsequent career, which was phenomenally successful and brilliant, Bristol had no part. At the early age of twenty-three he succeeded Sir Joshua Reynolds as portrait-painter to the king, and in 1820 was elected President of the Royal Academy. Lawrence died in 1830, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

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SIR FRANCIS FREELING (1764-1836), the eminent Secretary to the Post Office, an early Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and one of the founders of the Roxburgh Club, was born in Bristol and commenced his official career there.

HENRY HALLAM, the historian (1778-1859), was the son of Dr. Hallam, Dean of Bristol. He received his early education at the Bristol Grammar School; and from his relationship to the Elton family—he married the daughter of the Rev. Sir Abraham Elton—was always a familiar figure in the town.

Other names which should not be permitted to go unrecorded are those of the writers—Robert Lovell, the Quaker poet; the clever but eccentric Thomas Lovell Beddoes; Joseph Cottle, 'that Alfred made famous'; Ann Yearsley, the poetical milkmaid; the Rev. John Eagles, essayist, poet, and painter; the talented Porter family, which included Dr. W. O. Porter, author of *Sir Edward Seaward's Narrative*, and his sister Jane, whose *Scottish Chiefs* was once

**Bristol** the most widely circulated of works of fiction ; and Anna Maria, who wrote *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and numerous other once-popular works. Among artists, John Strahan, the architect ; Edward H. Baily, the sculptor, many of whose works adorn the city ; and Bird, Branwhite, Muller, and Ripingille, the painters, may be mentioned ; and among physicians and scientific men, Gibbs ; Thomas Dover, explorer and physician ; James Cowles Prichard, the father of British ethnology ; Thomas Beddoes, who married a daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and whose son was the better-known Thomas Lovell Beddoes ; Sir Humphry Davy, who was for a time the assistant of Dr. Beddoes at his 'Pneumatic' institution at the Hotwells ; Dr. J. Addington Symonds, and William B. Carpenter, the physiologist. The philanthropists, Thomas and Nicholas Thorne, John Whitson, Richard Reynolds, and Mary Carpenter ; the publishers, Thomas Longman and Amos Cottle ; and the local historians, William Barrett, Samuel Seyer, John Evans, and George Pryce, do not exhaust the list.

As Bristol was not only the second city in the kingdom, but also one of the great gateways toward Ireland, there were probably few eminent men who did not at some period or other visit it, either on business or from motives of curiosity, and during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries their numbers were vastly increased by the crowd of pleasure-seekers who resorted to Bath, only twelve miles away ; so that for century after century its streets were traversed by a long procession of royal,

noble, and eminent persons, including many foreigners. Many of the royal visits have been alluded to in the previous chapters ; of other visitors we are only now concerned with those who have given us interesting or valuable information about the appearance or the life of the city in the past, and those who have exercised an influence upon it. To the former belong the diarists, Evelyn and Pepys, upon whose accounts of Bristol we have already drawn.

Some distinguished Natives, Residents, and Visitors

DANIEL DEFOE spent some time in Bristol in hiding from his creditors, probably in or about 1692. It is said that he was known here as 'the Sunday gentleman,' from his habit of only appearing in public on that day, when he was secure from arrest. In his *Tour through the whole Island*, Defoe gives a very favourable description of the state of trade here in his day, when it was probably at the height of its prosperity ; his account of the city itself was not so flattering.

ALEXANDER POPE was in Bristol in 1735, and found little to admire here ; his picture of the town being that it was as if Wapping or Southwark were ten times as big. He was struck with the appearance of the quay : 'in the middle of the street hundreds of ships, their masts as thick as they can stand by one another, which is the oddest and most surprising sight imaginable.' The forest of masts is less dense now than at the time of Pope's visit, but the sight of shipping in the heart of an inland town is still the most characteristic feature of Bristol. He admired Queen Square, then just completed and adorned with



Bristol Rysbrach's statue of William III., but he found the town very unpleasant, and no civilised company in it.

A visitor who regarded the town rather from the point of view of Pope than that of Pepys or Defoe, was HORACE WALPOLE, who came over from Bath for a day, in October, 1776, and found it the 'dirtiest great shop I ever saw, with so foul a river, that, had I seen the least appearance of cleanliness, I should have concluded they washed all their linen in it as they do at Paris.'

DR. JOHNSON, accompanied by Boswell, visited Bristol in 1776. The chief object of his journey was to inquire on the spot into the authenticity of the Rowley manuscripts, as he had recently done in Scotland, in the case of the Ossian poems, and Boswell has left an amusing account of the visit. They called on Barrett, who showed them some of the so-called original manuscripts, but after a careful inspection of them they were quite satisfied of the imposture. Chatterton's friend, Catcot, the pewterer, acted as their guide, and 'seemed,' says Boswell, 'to pay no attention whatever to any objections, but insisted, as an end of all controversy, that we should go with him to the tower of the church of St. Mary Redcliff, and *view with our own eyes* the ancient chest in which the manuscripts were found. To this, Dr. Johnson good-naturedly agreed, and though troubled with a shortness of breathing, laboured up a long flight of steps till we came to the place where the wondrous chest stood. "There," said Catcot,

with a bouncing, confident credulity, "there is the very chest itself." After this *ocular demonstration* there was no more to be said.'

JOHN WESLEY (1703-1791) has some claim to be regarded rather as a resident than as a visitor, since during the half-century of his marvellous missionary journeyings Bristol was the nearest representative of a home to him. When here he usually lived at a house in Charles Street, St. James's, occupied by his brother Charles, which still stands, but at one time he had a lodging at Hotwells, and during the last few years of his life he found a home when in Bristol at the vicarage of the Temple Church. He was in the habit of speaking of St. James's Church as his parish church. It is not too much to say that Bristol was the cradle of Methodism, for it was not only the starting-point of his journeys, but the place where each new departure in his system was made. His first memorable visit was made on March 31, 1739, when he came to meet Whitfield, to whom it had been suggested 'if he will convert heathens, why does not he go to the colliers at Kingswood.' Wesley entered a note in his *Journal*, 'I could scarce reconcile myself to the strange way of preaching in the fields of which he set me an example'; but two days later he began his career as an open-air preacher, or, as he put it, 'I consented to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation.' The usual place of meeting of his congregation was in the picturesque Gothic hall of the Weavers' Company, now destroyed; but on May 9, 1739, he laid

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**Bristol** the foundation-stone of the first Wesleyan church. This chapel still stands between Broadmead and the Horse-fair, and has above it rooms for the preacher, which Wesley himself sometimes occupied. Out of doors his favourite places of preaching were in King Square and Prince Street, and especially at Kingswood, and all through his association with Bristol, he constantly visited and preached at the prison in Newgate. He also preached occasionally at the churches of St. Ewen and St. Werburgh, and very frequently at the Temple, for whose rector, Mr. Easterbrook, he entertained a warm affection. It was in Bristol that the system of 'class-meetings,' which plays so large a part in Wesleyan religious life, originated. Wesley's *Journal* contains a few, but too few, entries of local interest. At first the mob regarded his preaching with distaste, and he ran much risk of bodily injury : like the Quakers a century before, he was held to be a Jesuit. In 1740 the mayor, 'the minister of God for good,' said firmly, 'I will have no rioting in this city,' and he was afterwards always respectfully received. In 1758 he attended a performance of Handel's *Messiah* at the cathedral, and noted that the congregation was never so serious at sermon as at this performance. The next year, 1759, was memorable in Bristol for the presence of a very large number of French prisoners of war ; eleven hundred of these unfortunate men were confined at Knowle, on the outskirts of the city. There Wesley visited them, and found them with only straw to lie on, and nothing but foul rags to cover them. He narrates that he was

much affected, and the same evening he preached a sermon from the text, 'Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing that ye were strangers in the land of Egypt,' by which he obtained sufficient money from his own flock for the immediate necessities of the prisoners, and succeeded in interesting the authorities in their condition. Wesley confirmed Howard's account of the cleanliness of Newgate, and his testimony to the character of the gaoler deserves recording—that the keeper of Newgate deserves remembrance as the Man of Ross. The vice and disorder of the inhabitants of Lawford's Gate district have already been noticed; it had not abated in Wesley's time, for he called them 'the rebel rout that neither fear God nor reverence man.' He visited much among them, and was able to see an improved condition of things in their district. In 1776 he found no one there out of work, but he reports that there were two hundred public-houses in that one suburb. In that year he endeavoured to make a more exact estimate of the population of Bristol than had hitherto been accomplished, and he came to the conclusion that the number of inhabitants was not less than 80,000. He told the citizens roundly that their besetting sins were the love of money and the love of ease; and, when a very old man, he had the courage to preach, both in his chapel and in the Temple Church, against the slave-trade. Wesley left Bristol for the last time in September 27, 1790, and died in London on the eve of setting out once more for the western city, March 2, 1791.

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## Bristol

**THOMAS CLARKSON (1760-1846)** began in Bristol his crusade against the slave-trade. He spent a considerable time in the city in 1787, and collected at the docks and in the low riverside public-houses the information which led in later years to the abolition of the slave-trade, and, later still, of the institution of slavery in the British Empire.

**THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800-1859)** was connected with Bristol through his mother, a Bristol woman, and was in early life a frequent visitor; his hostess when here was Hannah More, under whom his early education was commenced. His picturesque description of the city in the seventeenth century is familiar to all.



VIEW ON THE AVON

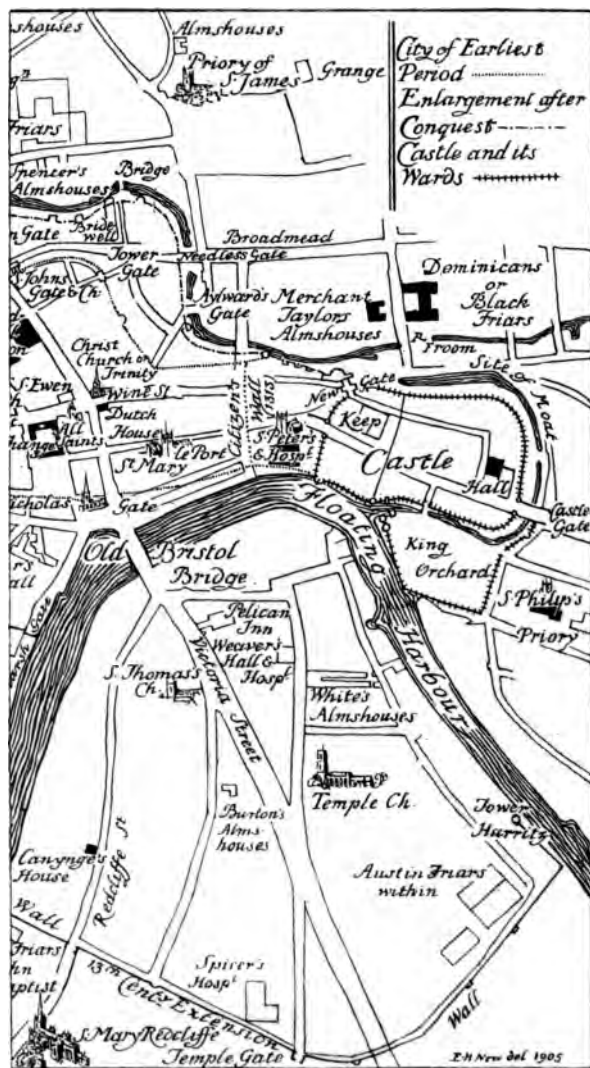
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The City  
of  
**BRISTOL**  
Showing sites of Ancient Buildings,  
Walks etc.

Colston's Alm  
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Tower  
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March II  
Gate  
Merchant  
Venturer  
Hall  
Assembly  
Rooms  
Norman  
Gate  
Deanery  
College  
Green  
St. Marks  
Gaunt's Hoops  
or Billeswyle  
St. Augustine  
the less  
Cathedral  
St. Augustine's Abbey  
St. Augustine's or  
Canon's  
Marsh  
Floating  
Bridge  
The City of Bristol

Existing Buildings: Black or Sketched  
Sites of " : In Outline





## APPENDIX

### ITINERARY

IN the previous chapters the places and objects of interest in Bristol have been described, not in their topographical relation, but in connection with the chapters of the city's history which they illustrate. It has consequently been thought desirable for the convenience of visitors to append a short itinerary through the city indicating in their order the places and things worthy of notice, and the pages of the book on which they are described or alluded to. If we start from Temple Mead Station on the Somerset side of the Avon, and follow the modern Victoria Street, we reach Bristol Bridge (p. 32), leaving the Temple Church with its leaning tower (p. 210), and the statue of Neptune (p. 221) on the right. Crossing the bridge the old city is entered at the site of the Bridge Gate at the foot of High Street. Here on the left is St. Nicholas' Church, and a few yards further on the right, St. Mary-le-Port Street, with its picturesque houses (p. 258). The old houses on both sides of High Street should be noticed. At the top of this street the High Cross, the centre of the old city, is reached, with All Saints' Church (p. 194), and Christ Church (p. 197), at two of its angles, the Council House (p. 222) at a third, and the old Dutch House (p. 256) at the fourth. Now, crossing over,

Broad Street is reached, with the Guildhall on the left, and Taylor's Court (p. 230) on the right ; at the bottom of Broad Street will be seen St. John's Church and Gate. Returning to the Cross, and turning down Corn Street, past the site of the Tolzey, the Exchange (p. 224), with the brazen tables (p. 224) in front, is seen on the left, and the Commercial Rooms on the right, with statuary by Baily. Here the visitor should pause to look at the charming view of St. Michael's Hill and Church, seen down Small Street (see Mr. New's drawing, p. 70), and then descend past handsome banks and insurance offices as far as St. Stephen's Church (p. 206). Then retracing his steps he should descend Small Street as far as the Law Library, with its Norman features (p. 255). Once more returning to the Cross, Wine Street, formerly Wynch Street, is reached. On the left side of Wine Street a tablet marks Southey's birthplace, but most of the picturesque houses which lined the street have been rebuilt in recent years. From Wine Street the short Dolphin Street leads to St. Peter's Street, with the Church (p. 199) and Hospital (p. 256) on the right, and an excellent example of a fifteenth-century house on the left. Now Castle Street is entered, which crosses the site of the castle from end to end. (For the circuit of the castle and the town walls see p. 103 and following pages.) At the lower end of Castle Street the fine broad thoroughfare of Old Market Street is reached, with quaint blocks of almshouses and other buildings. Here turning to the left along Castle Ditch and Broad Weir we arrive at Merchant Street, with the Merchant Taylors' Almshouses (p. 264), and the Dominican Friary, Quakers' Friars, on the right. Then turning to the left along

Bristol

right

Broadmead the historic Meeting-house of the same name is passed, and a short distance to the north are the pleasant gardens below St. James's Priory Church (p. 158). From this point Lewin's Mead, which leads westward, should be followed. Up the second narrow lane on the left the scanty remains of the Franciscan Friary (p. 175) will be found, and at the end of the street, at the corner of Christmas Steps,<sup>1</sup> the Early English gateway of St. Bartholomew's Hospital (p. 177) will be seen. Christmas Steps should next be ascended: near the top on the left is the Chapel of Foster's Almshouses (p. 178), with the curious seats below (see illustration on p. 19), and a quaint inscription. Christmas Steps end at Park Row, on the other side of which is St. Michael's Hill; this should be followed a short distance, not only to inspect Colston's Almshouses, but also for the fine view looking over the towers and spires of the old city. The visitor should next follow Park Row, passing the Red Lodge (p. 257), as far as Queen's Road, where the Museum, Library, and Art Gallery are situated, and then turn down Park Street. A short distance down on the right is Charlotte Street, which leads to the great open space of Brandon Hill, crowned by the Cabot Memorial Tower, with fine view and traces of the fortifications thrown up during the Civil War. Once more returning to Park Street, College Green is reached, with the Mayor's Chapel or Gaunt's Hospital (p. 162) on the east, and the Cathedral with the Abbey precincts (p. 135) on the south. From College Green, St. Augustine's Parade leads past St. Augustine's Church to the thirteenth-century harbour (p. 112). The fine portico on the quay belongs to the

<sup>1</sup> No. 2 on plan.

Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary-on-the-Quay. Next <sup>Itinerary</sup> crossing at the site of the old drawbridge, where an inscription celebrates the departure of Cabot on his memorable voyage. Here the Broad Quay on the right leads to Prince Street, with the Assembly Rooms (p. 249) and interesting houses. From Prince Street, King Street should be followed. This street, still one of the most picturesque in England (see Mr. New's drawing on p. 229), contains several buildings of interest; they are: (i) the Hall of the Merchant Venturers' Company (p. 231); (ii) the Merchants' Almshouses<sup>1</sup> (p. 264); (iii) the City Library<sup>2</sup> (p. 225); (iv) the old Theatre (p. 248); (v) the Hall of the Coopers' Company<sup>3</sup> (p. 230); (vi) St. Nicholas' Almshouses<sup>4</sup>; and (vii) the finest group of half-timber houses now remaining in Bristol, including the Llandoger Tavern<sup>5</sup> (p. 259). From the end of King Street the Welsh Back leads along the riverside to Bristol Bridge. Recrossing this, Redcliffe Street is entered by turning sharply to the right; here at No. 97 the hall of Canynges' house may still be seen, and the great spire of St. Mary Redcliffe (p. 184) dominates the view. Before the church is reached a narrow lane on the right leads to the Friends' Burial Ground, with the rock-cut Hermitage of St. John. From the north side of St. Mary Redcliffe, Pyle Street, in which is the school at which Chatterton received his early education, follows the line of the town ditch back to the station at Temple Mead.

<sup>1</sup> No. 7 on plan.

<sup>2</sup> No. 5 on plan.

<sup>5</sup> No. 8 on plan.

<sup>2</sup> No. 4 on plan.

<sup>4</sup> No. 6 on plan.



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